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ĀDI ŚAṄKARA: HIS LIFE & TIMES

Discourses Delivered

by

His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī: Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha

Translated into English

By

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN



1980

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

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KULAPATI'S PREFACE

THE Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-Indian organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any make-shift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily

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accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata,* summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it, the *Gita,* by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata*: "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita,* which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1, Queen Victoria Road,
New Delhi.
3rd October 1951. K. M. MUNSHI



His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Pitha.

DEDICATION

With His Holiness's gracious permission and with his abundant blessings, it has been possible for me to complete this significant task. My deepest gratitude goes to the Sage and I pray that he be pleased to accept this work as a token of profound devotion to him.

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

I consider it a unique privilege to have the good fortune of translating the series of speeches on "Śaṅkara, His Life and Times" delivered by His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī, Śaṅkarācārya of the Kāñcī Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha. During his stay in Madras in the year 1932, the Great Sage gave to us the wonderful experience of letting us hear from him the story of Ādi Śaṅkara in an uninterrupted series so that we could benefit from its blessed and powerful meaning.

Sri K. Nilakantan had the commendable idea of compiling the record of these speeches into book-form in Tamil and as such it was published by Messrs. B. G. Paul and Co. in 1933. I have based my translation thereon.

I felt that it was very necessary to share this treasure with those who do not know Tamil, as also with our foreign friends.

By his luminous reflection, His Holiness has thrown an insightful light on even the obscurest details concerning the life of Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda and he has given us a vivid impression of the Great Master against the rich background of our multi-faceted culture. Thus, we have an account of all the aspects of our spirituality and our customs, their meanings, and reasons for being interwoven in the life-story of the Great Ācārya. Mythology, history and so many other subjects find their unifying harmony in the simple and clear rendition so characteristic of His Holiness.

It will be noticed that His Holiness adapts himself to the simplest of minds by using easy examples

and modes of expression, without compromising in regard to the highest teaching while doing so.

Unconcerned about so-called sophisticated opinions, he reminds and even exhorts us to resort to our holy scriptures and teachings while striving to make progress and not to neglect our spiritual heritage while we justly seek to better our conditions. He points out to us that when the direction of our endeavour is God-ward only, then do all other facets of our activities become really valid and authoritative as also of lasting effectiveness. He calls for all-round spiritual development. Furthermore, he strongly advises that before we characterize so many items of our culture as mere superstition of the past, we investigate into our legends discriminatingly and find out the meaning and truths which are contained therein. He advocates devotion to one's chosen form of the Deity because such devotion will lead one eventually to the realization of the ultimate Reality which is the supreme felicity and the highest beatitude. This experience becomes possible through service without any selfish motive, one-pointed concentration gained by devotion and study of the Vedāntic teachings accompanied by reflection and meditation. Towards this end, the knowledge of the biography of Ādi Śaṅkara will itself serve as a powerful guide to all spiritual aspirants.

I greatly appreciate the readiness with which Sri. S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, has agreed to publish this volume, which appears under the title "Ādi Śaṅkara: His Life and Times."

Madras, 1st March, 1980 T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

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I

THE STORY OF GAUḌAPĀDA

When Lord Naṭarāja was dancing, Patañjali and Vyāghrapāda were standing on either side and enjoying the dance. In pictures and sculptures of Lord Naṭarāja we may see the figures of these two sages standing on either side. The lower half of the body of Vyāghrapāda is that of the tiger ánd the lower half of the body of Patañjali is that of the serpent.

Patañjali was an incarnation of Ādi Śeṣa[1]. He wrote the great commentary on grammar. As he was the son of Atri,[2] he is called Ātreya. His mother's name was Ghoṇika; therefore he is also known as Ghoṇikāputra. He wrote three treatises. He wrote a *sūtra* (aphorisms) on Yoga. He wrote a commentary on grammar and he wrote a manual called Caraka which is a work on Āyur-veda (medicine), which is an *Upaveda* (an auxiliary to the Veda). This work has also another name which is Ātreya Saṁhitā. Thus Patañjali wrote treatises on three sciences which con-

1. Ādi Śeṣa in Hindu mythology serves Viṣṇu in several aspects. He is in the form of a thousand-headed serpent. Usually he is depicted as the bed on which the Lord Viṣṇu reclines on the milk-ocean.
2. Atri, a great Vedic Ṛṣi.

cern the mind, speech and body. The Yoga-sūtra is the work conducive to the mind. It explains the method by means of which the mind may be controlled and purified. The commentary on grammar is helpful for speech. With its help we may learn to speak without any flaw. The medical treatise Caraka will be found instrumental to maintain bodily health. He is thus the author of three works which are useful for purifying the three instruments, namely, the mind, speech and body.

The commentary which he wrote on grammar is known as the Mahā Bhāṣya (Great Commentary). There is a saying to the effect 'Only Ādi Śeṣa who is endowed with a thousand tongues should explain.' Ādi Śeṣa can explain anything. Having come to know that he had written a commentary on grammar, many students went to him for receiving lessons. The number of students was one thousand. Patañjali was in the hall of one thousand pillars at Cidaṁbaram.[3] He resolved to give his teaching quickly to the one thousand students. Thinking that he could not remove the doubts raised by all the students with one mouth he assumed his original form as Ādi Śeṣa endowed with a thousand heads. Even the sight of Ādi Śeṣa or the contact with his breath would reduce people to ashes. Therefore staying behind a screen he began to teach. What could be done to prevent any student going out of the hall while the teaching was on? In order to prevent this from happening he gave this order: If anyone goes out without permission he will become a *Brahma-rakṣas.*

3. Cidaṁbaram is the place where the famous temple of Naṭarāja (dancing Śiva) is situated. The temple itself is called Cidaṁbaram.

Brahma-rakṣas is a being similar to a ghost. There are many types of ghosts. Among the gods also there are several types. There are many beings which belong to neither of these categories. Among men there are different types. Similar is the case with birds, with beings which crawl, and with insects which move about. Between the insects and us there is great difference. Similarly among the gods who have been created there are differences. The gods are those who at their very birth belong to a high grade of development. We are not conversant with these matters. Which categories of beings reside in which worlds? Whence have we come? How were we created? We have to know these from studying the Veda, etc. Some have this knowledge even at birth but we have to acquire it through effort. Those who have this knowledge even at birth are the gods. One of the names by which they are known is 'They to whom knowledge is self-evident' — *svayaṁ-pratibhāta-vedāḥ.*

In the Veda, topics such as rituals and sacrifices are dealt with. The system of Mīmāṁsā professes to expound the purport of the Veda. Jaimini has written a *sūtra* (aphoristic work) for Mīmāṁsā. It is settled by the teachers of Mīmāṁsā that for the gods there is no need for studying the Veda, observing the Vedic rites, etc. Why? We perform rituals, sacrifices, etc. for the gods. For whose sake should gods perform them? For the gods, investiture with the sacred thread, recitation of the Veda, etc., are not prescribed. They have no eligibility for these at all. When there is not even investiture with the sacred thread there is not also performance of sacrifices,

etc. The gods are *adhikṛta-adhikarins* (eligibles of those who are eligible) i.e. they are those who enjoy happiness.

Vyāsa is the author of the *Uttara-mīmāṁsā-sūtra* (i.e. Vedānta-sūtra). Can the gods perform *japa* (repeating sacred names)? Is the path of meditation meant for them? These matters are discussed by Vyāsa. We worship the gods such as Indra. There is the meditation on Sūrya (the Sun-god). Whom should Sūrya worship? How can Indra worship Indra? Therefore, worship or meditation is not prescribed for the gods. Have they the eligibility to follow the path of knowledge (*jñāna*)? Discussing this question it is stated that they have certainly the eligibility to realize the identity of the *jīva* (individual soul) with *Brahman* through hearing, reflection and concentration. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya has stated this clearly.

According to Jaimini's teachings the gods are not eligible for reciting the Veda, etc., because they are not invested with the sacred thread. Why are they not eligible to study the *Upaniṣads*? Because they are those to whom knowledge is self-evident i.e., they are endowed with knowledge of the entire Veda even at birth. To them knowledge of the truth is self-evident. Even as the young fish has the ability to swim even at birth, so also the gods are by nature endowed with knowledge.

The difference between us and the gods is analogous to that between insects and us. Among the gods there are various grades such as *Kinnara, Kimpuruṣa, Yakṣa, Siddha, Cārana.* According to one

reckoning there are thirty-three crores of Gods. Some critics find fault with us saying: "There is only one God. He has been turned into thirty-three crores." We do not perform sacrifices, etc., to the gods thinking that they are the Supreme Godhead. We do admit that the gods have greater power of knowledge of action, etc., than what we have. There are three powers, those of knowledge, desire and action. As we descend the level of creation, action and knowledge get diminished. We do not have the strength that the elephant, the lion, etc., have. We cannot build nests like the birds. We cannot construct a honey-comb. These are instances of the power of action. This power we possess to a very much lesser degree than the animals, and the birds. But the power of knowledge is greater in us. With the gods those two powers are much more than with us. The Supreme Godhead is one alone. But the gods are not the Supreme.

Just as there are several categories among the gods, so also there are many divisions among the evil-producing created beings: *Bhūta, Piśāca, Rakṣas,* etc.

Piśāco guhyakaḥ siddho bhūto'mī deva-yonayaḥ

[Amara]

In the category called *Rakṣas* there is a species known as *Brahma-rakṣas*. Those who have studied the Veda well and die prematurely remain as ghosts endowed with the memory of the Veda. They are called *Brahma-rakṣas*. In the *Amara-kośa* the godly species are mentioned as follows:

vidyādharo'psaro-yakṣa-rakṣo-gandharva-
kinnarāḥ.

Brahma-rakṣas belongs to one of these created beings.

After stating that those students who went out without permission would become *Brahma-rakṣas* Patañjali who was Ādi Śeṣa began teaching them with one thousand mouths from behind the screen. He had also enjoined that the students should not look in, lifting the screen. A doubt came to one of the students. "How does the teacher, being one, instruct so many of us at the same time?" He then lifted the screen and looked in. The sight of Ādi Śeṣa and the poisonous air that emanated from him reduced all the students to ashes. The number of those who were thus destroyed was nine-hundred and ninety-nine. Only one student had gone out at the time. He was a little dull-witted, and was not able to understand well what Ādi Śeṣa was teaching. Therefore he thought he could go out for a while and return later. And he went out.

Coming to know that nine-hundred and ninety-nine disciples had died, Ādi Śeṣa assumed again the form of Patañjali and appeared sorrowful because of the tragedy that had happened. At that time the student who had gone out re-entered. He came in with trepidation wondering as to what would happen to him since he had transgressed the teacher's injunction. Patañjali who saw him coming became a little happy although this student was dull-witted. Patañjali felt happy because he had survived. There was no time thereafter for Patañjali to complete his teaching. Therefore he thought that he would bestow his grace on this sole-surviving student. Addressing him he said: "May you get to know all that I know. Because you went out without permission you have necessarily assumed the form of a *Brahma-rakṣas*. Yet

there is a means of salvation from this predicament. When you come to impart the instruction you have received from me to a student who is fit to receive it, you will be released from this curse." All these details are given in a beautiful manner by Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita, the author of works like the Jānakīpariṇaya, who lived two hundred years ago. The student to whom Patañjali bestowed his grace was Gauḍapāda, the one who belonged to the *Gauḍa* country.

The region which is to the north of the Vindhya mountains is the *Gauḍa* country. The region which is to the south is the *Drāviḍa* country. Among the *Gauḍas* there are five sections. They are referred to as *Pañca-gauḍas*. Similarly there are five sections of *Drāviḍas*. The Brahmins who have gone from the south to Kāśī are known as *Drāviḍa-brahmins*. Just as in the Tamil country there are Telugus, in the Mahārāṣṭra country there are Tamils and Telugus. In Mahārāṣṭra every person has a family title attached to his name: *Kelkar, Tilak, Savarkār,* etc. For those who migrated from the Telugu country a long time ago there is the family name *Telang*. They do not know the Telugu language now. For those persons who went from Tamil Nadu there is the family name *Drāviḍ*. In the history books that are written now there is a distinction made between *Āryas* and *Drāviḍs*. Because of this there arise disputes. The distinction that was made of old is the one between *Gauḍas* and *Drāviḍas*. The five *Gauḍa* sections are: *Sārasvata, Kānyakubja, Gauḍa, Utkara* and *Maithila*. The *Sārasvatas* are in Kashmir. The *Kānyakubjas* are in the Punjab; the *Gauḍas* are in Bengal; the *Utkaras* are in Orissa; and the *Maithilas* are in Nepal,

Bihar, etc. Of the five *Gauḍa* sections the principal section is that which is called *Gauḍa*. Similarly of the five *Drāviḍa* sections the principal section is that which is known as *Drāviḍa*. Persons belonging to those two sections are now usually seen to be employed as clerks. They are adepts in learning the English language. Among the *Maithilas* there are many who bear the title '*Miśra*'. In the Maithila country there are places called Dharbanga and Janakpur. Dharbanga is a corrupt form of *Dhanur-bhaṅga*. That is the place where Rāma broke the bow. Janakpur is named after King Janaka. The place where Janaka lived is *Mithilāpuri*. That territory is now known as Maithila. This name is after the ancient city of Mithila.

The five *Drāviḍa* sections are: *Āndhra, Karnāṭaka, Mahārāṣtra, Gūrjara* and *Drāviḍa*.

Of the one-thousand students who had gone to learn grammar from Patañjali, one, as we have said, escaped death. That was *Gauḍa*. He hailed from the *Gauḍa* country. As a result of his teacher's curse he became a *Brahma-rakṣas*. He began to fly in the air.

A *Brahma-rakṣas* would eat up every day a Brahmin learned in the Veda. Having assumed a form, it would drag those who are skilled in reciting the Veda to a distance, and after putting them several questions which they could not answer, it would beat them to death. There is a popular saying in the villages to this effect: "A *Brahma-rakṣas* has beaten so and so to death." *Gauḍa* who had become a *Brahma-rakṣas* went to the banks of the river Narmadā and sat on an

old fig tree which was there. That place is in between the five *Gauḍa* countries and the five *Drāviḍa* countries. Those who went from north India to the south or from south India to the north had to pass through this place. Scholars from the north who went to the south for studying the texts that were in vogue there, as also scholars from the south who went to the north for getting acquainted with the texts that were in vogue there, were travelling every day through that place. *Gauḍa* would ask them a question in grammar and they would blink being unable to answer. Immediately the *Brahma-rakṣas* would beat them up and eat them.

The pronunciation of words which are similar may sometimes be different. If one were to ask a person to pronounce such words quickly there may occur mistakes in pronunciation. If one were asked: "What is B, U, T?" one would say: "*baṭ*". "C, U, T?" one would say: "*kaṭ*". And quickly if for instance a child is asked: "What is P, U, T?" He would say: "*paṭ*". In grammar there is what is known as *niṣṭā-pratyaya*. In Sanskrit *pratyaya* means the suffix of a word, *pratyaya* is the word-ending. There are several kinds of *pratyaya*: *Taddhita, kṛt, sup, tiṅg*, etc., *niṣṭā* is one such type of *pratyaya*. When that *pratyaya* is combined with the root it would give the meaning of 'What has been done'. For example, *bhuj* is a root. The meaning of it is 'eat'. '*Bhuktam*' means what has been eaten; '*kta*' is a *niṣṭā-pratyaya*. All words which have this *pratyaya* would give the meaning 'what has been done'; for example *saktam* = what has been smeared over; *siktam* = what has been sprinkled over; *raktam* =

what has been made red. The word *anurāgam,* when combined with *niṣṭā-pratyaya,* would become *anuraktam.* The root *pac* means to cook. If the *niṣṭā-pratyaya* is combined with it, it would become *pakvam* and not *paktam.* There is a sūtra in grammar governing this: *pacovaḥ* [Pāṇini-sūtra VIII, ii, 52].

If any one versed in grammar came along, Gauḍa would ask him the question: "What is the form the word, which has the root *pac,* would take when combined with the *niṣṭā-pratyaya?*" The scholar would immediately reply: "*paktam*". In those times there was no *Mahābhāṣya* for grammar. It was not known then that the verbal root *pac* was an exception to the rule regarding the formation of words with *niṣṭā-pratyaya.* On hearing the reply *paktam,* the *Brahma-rakṣas* would say: "No, it is *pakvam* and you too will become *pakvam*" and immediately eat that scholar up. In this manner the days passed.

One day there came along a comely Brahmin boy. Hearing that at Cidambaram Patañjali was expounding the *Mahābhāṣya* he was coming to the south from Kashmir. On seeing him the *Brahma-rakṣas* (Gauḍa) felt very happy. It thought: "What a beautiful form. To-day I have obtained a delicious meal." It put on the disguise of a Brahmin and stood before the boy. It asked the usual question, and the boy replied: "*Pakvam.*" At once Gauḍa-*brahma-rakṣas* became greatly pleased and said to the boy: "All these days no suitable student came. You are the proper disciple. Whatever knowledge my teacher imparted to me I shall impart to you. Be seated here. Where do you want to go?" The boy said: "I am on my way to Cidambaram in order to learn grammar from Patañjali." On hearing this Gauḍa remarked: "The story of Cidambaram is all over. What you intend to learn at Cidambaram I shall teach you here. That *Mahā-bhāṣya* remains with me. Sit down here." Who can be at peace accepting a *Brahma-rakṣas* as teacher? Gauḍa strictly gave orders to the boy saying: "You should not leave this tree as long as I continue to teach you. You should not sleep. I shall complete the teaching as soon as possible." What was to be done? The boy who had come to learn grammar sat there itself on the tree. He thought he should take down in writing all the lessons he would be listening to. At that time there was no ink-pot, nor pen and there was no time to fetch an iron quill to write with. The teacher had ordered that he should not leave the tree. The boy made an incision into his thigh and blood was coming out; he broke off a twig from a branch of the tree, and dipped the twig in the blood and wrote on the leaves of the tree all that he was taught. The *Brahma-rakṣas* was teaching non-stop both night and day. Without food and without sleep the boy wrote down what was being taught to him for nine days. He tied up the leaves on which he had written, into a bundle. It is the script that was written on those leaves that is being studied even now as the *Mahā-bhāṣya.*

Who was that disciple? His name was Candra Śarmā. This story is to be found in a work called *Patañjali-vijaya.* That was a work of one Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita who lived about two-hundred years ago. Who was Candra Śarmā? Patañjali who pronounced a curse on Gauḍa thought to himself: "Which student will go to him with the required ability to

learn the commentary on grammar and absolve him from the curse? It is only I that have to go to him. Only then he will be released from the curse." Thinking thus he became Candra Śarmā. It was this Candra Śarmā that in his later *āśrama* became the preceptor of Śri Śaṅkarācārya, bearing the name Govinda Bhagavatpāda. In the *guru-paraṁparā* of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya there is the following praise of Govinda Bhagavatpāda:

> haritalpa-harāṅghri-nūpura-kṣmādhara-
> saumitri-balātriputrajanmā
> jayatād-uparevamātta-dhāmā jayagovindamuniḥ
> sa candrama nāmā (Guru-ratna-mālikā)

Govinda-muni is Govinda Bhagavatpāda. The expression *Candra-nāmā* refers to his *pūrvāśrama* name. He was an incarnation of Ādi Śeṣa. He had assumed many disguises. At one time he serves as the bed for Hari. In another situation he becomes the anklet for Paramaśiva. He it is that supports the earth. '*Kṣmā*' is the earth. The word is derived from *kṣamā*. *Kṣamā* means patience. The earth has infinite patience. You may dig in it, cut it through; it will bear all that. Saumitri is Lakṣmaṇa. Ādi Śeṣa came as Balarāma and also as the son of Atri. As the son of Atri he was Ātreya, i.e., Patañjali. May the one who took all these forms be victorious. This is the meaning of the verse.

Candra Śarmā after assuming *sannyāsa* lived on the banks of the Narmadā awaiting the arrival of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya in order to bless him. How did Candra Śarmā receive the lessons in grammar for many days without sleep or food? In a previous incarnation,

i.e., as Lakṣmaṇa[4] he had the experience of spending fourteen years without a wink of sleep. It would seem as though he had habituated himself to sleeplessness in order that now as Candra Śarmā he could dispense with sleep.

4. Lakṣmaṇa was the younger brother of Śrī Rāma who accompanied him and Sītā to the forest and guarded them throughout fourteen years of their exile without a wink of sleep. Lakṣmaṇa was an incarnation of Ādi Śeṣa. Candra Śarmā is also regarded as an incarnation of Ādi Śeṣa.

II

THE STORY OF GOVINDA BHAGAVATPĀDA

Saṁskṛta is the language of the gods. Since it is the language of the Gīrvāṇas (gods)[5] it is called *Gairvāṇī*. In the work *Kāvyadarśa* of Daṇḍin it is stated: *saṁskṛtam nāma daivī vāk.* In the Kambarāmāyaṇa there is a statement: "Those who have rendered this story in the language of the gods are three." Here Kambar refers to *saṁskṛta* as the language of the gods. In the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali it is said that this language is to be had in profusion in the world of the gods.

The term *saṁskṛta* means what has been sanctified or purified. It is that which has been purified through nine *vyākaraṇas* (grammatical texts). The old name for this language is *deva-vāk* or *deva-bhāṣā*. It is stated that all should speak in *saṁskṛta*. *Mleccha-bhāṣā* is the language which has unclear words; all other languages are but variants of *saṁskṛta*. There are many languages which have not been purified through grammar. Even children should learn *saṁskṛta*.

5. Gīrvāṇas: The gods are so called because they are fond of praise.

The language that we speak should be such that it is governed by grammar. *Saṁskṛta* is what has been purified through grammar. The one who wrote a commentary on grammar is the Sage Patañjali. Gauḍapāda went to Patañjali as a disciple and because of a curse he became a *Brahma-rakṣas.* To him went Candra Śarmā. Gauḍapāda, who had been awaiting the arrival of a competent disciple, in accordance with the injunction of his teacher, taught grammar to Candra Śarmā. Candra Śarmā wrote what he learnt on leaves plucked from the sacred fig-tree.

The lessons in grammar were over and for Gauḍa the life as *Brahma-rakṣas* came to an end. He thought thus: "Hereafter I shall acquire a sense of detachment. I should meditate on the Self. For that I should go in search of a preceptor." He began to search for one who was a liberated sage even at birth. He came to know that one such preceptor was Śukācārya. Śuka was born as a knower of Brahman. He did not make any effort, he did not perform sacrifices, etc.

One is born as a result of residual *karma*. In the life that is thus acquired, one must perform good *karma*, get one's mind purified and then gain knowledge of the Self. Without these procedures, how was it that Śuka was a sage even at birth? Even for *jñānīs* there would be the body so long as *prārabdha-karma* (*karma* that has begun to fructify) lasts. And then there comes to them liberation from the body (*videha-mukti*). Such being the case, how did Śuka take birth as a liberated soul? Were there others like him?

Vāmadeva was a *jñānī* (sage) even while he was in his mother's womb. We come to know this from the statement: "Even while I was in the womb I knew the crores of births taken by all the gods." He further says "How was I before this birth? I had countless births enveloping me like fortresses of iron. But now the wings have started growing. They have grown as for an eagle. I have started flying out from those bonds. Now I am able to know all sorts of births." Thus we read in the *Aitareya-upaniṣad*: *na mlecchita vai nāpabhāṣita vai* (Mahā-bhāṣya). This is what Śuka says. Vyāsa too cites in the *Brahma-sūtra* the example of Vāmadeva:

śāstradṛṣṭyā tūpadeśo vāmadevavat

[Brahma-sūtra I-i-30]

Śuka and Vāmadeva are given as examples of the liberated ones. Scripture itself cites them as examples. They were sages even at birth.

In the hymn of praise relating to Govinda Bhagavatpāda, in the Guruparaṁparā-stotra, there is a verse praising Śuka:

jananījaṭharād-iva cyavan yo jagato nādravad-
ātmavid-vipadbhyaḥ
anahantam aham tam ātmavantam bhagavantam
śukam āśraye praśāntam

[Guru-ratna mālikā]

In this verse it is stated that Śuka, even when he came out of the mother's womb, was unaffected by the sufferings of the world and that he was free from egoity.

In the Bhāgavata there is a verse which relates to Śuka:

yaṁ pravrajantam anapetam apetakṛtyam
dvaipāyano virahakātara ājuhāva
putreti tanmayataya taravo' bhinedustaṁ
sarvabhūtahṛdayam munim ānato'smi

[Bhāgavatam]

We go to a place; we go in order to accomplish something. If that something has been accomplished we leave that place. Śuka knowing that what had to be accomplished had been accomplished, even before being invested with the sacred thread, started to leave his home. In the Guruparaṁparā-stotra it is stated that he was not afraid of the world. Here it is said that he started to leave. From this we have to infer that he started to leave even before being invested with the sacred thread. For starting to leave, should not the hands and feet grow sufficiently, and should one not gain the required strength to walk? Dvaipāyana is Vyāsa. He did not have Self-knowledge when he was born. He was one who had love for his son. Therefore, when Śuka started leaving, Vyāsa cried out: "Oh son!" But Śuka had started leaving because there was nothing to be done. Why did he not have anything to do?

What is doing work? Doing work is for gaining something or for rejecting something. These constitute work. One must gain something which is not there or something which is not already accomplished or one must reject what one does not desire. A bad servant is to be sent away; a good servant is to be taken into service. Enemies are to be removed,

friends should be welcomed. Thus, all actions in the world are in the form of rejection and acceptance, grasping and giving up. This is what is called work. In order to acquire wealth one must work. In order to remove misery one must work. Any work is done for the sake of attaining happiness and avoiding misery. What is it that cannot be accepted or rejected? It is only we. We cannot reject ourselves or accept ourselves. We are not that which is rejected. All else which is different may be rejected or accepted. It is only he that believes in the existence of something else that has work to do. He works in order to reject or accept that something else. If all that we see is realized to be us, then there is no work at all for us. There being nothing else, which are we to accept and which to reject? In that state neither is possible. There is no work. Pain, hunger, misery, happiness, if all these are us then how is work possible? Now we imagine that we are the skin. If the skin is dark we say "we are dark". If the skin is fair we say "we are fair" and we feel proud. We have the notion "we, we" in all such usage. When we have the notion we are these (dark, fair, etc.) why should we not have the notion "we" in all things? In fact, we are that way but we do not know that we are as all. If we come to know that, how will there be action then? It is only when there is something other than us that we can gain it or get rid of it. If all are we i.e., if all are the Self, the true Reality, then there will be no work at all.

Śuka had realized his identity with all. He became the Self which is in all things. When he was running away, Vyāsa called him. But who is to respond? Śuka had become all things. Should not all things respond? All the trees there responded saying, "Why do you call us?" All the animals there responded in the same manner. Śuka was in the form of all beings. It was because he was all, that there was no work for him and he ran.

Gauḍa thought that he should approach such a preceptor and receive his grace. He came to know that Śuka was living at Badarikāśrama on the Himālayas. He went there and received *sannyāsa* from him. He came to be known as Gauḍapādācārya. He is an *Ācārya* in the line of succession of preceptors. What does the line of succession mean?

We are all that there is in the world. Only pure consciousness really exists. That we are. In each and every body there is consciousness.

yā brahmādi-pīlikānta-tanuṣu protā
jagatsākṣiṇī

[Manīṣā-pañcaka]

There is a lamp. It is useful for seeing things. All lamps will become useless if there is not the seeing eye. There will be darkness everywhere. The eye may be alright but if the mind is not there, one cannot see with the eye. If one swoons and falls down, one will not see even if the eyes are open. Therefore the eye will be useful only if the mind is there. Even the mind by itself will be of no use. The light of the Self should be reflected in it. Only if there is this reflection, the mind will think. If the mind thinks the eye will see. If the eye sees, the light of the lamp will be manifest. With the light of the lamp one can see the inert objects. It is the light

of the Self that is called consciousness. Consciousness is homogeneous and the same everywhere. There are no differences in electric light. If a switch is pressed all lights burn. But the light that is manifest will depend upon the nature of the bulb. Similarly, although consciousness is the same it becomes manifest differently in accordance with the nature of each thing. In order to enable the light of the Self to shine in its plenitude and in order to instruct us in the disciplines that are necessary for removing sorrow, there is required the line of succession of preceptors. A preceptor hands down to his successor the ability to continue the aforesaid mission. It is the series of preceptors who succeed one another in this manner that is called *Ācārya-paraṁparā*. We should be grateful for this succession. The preceptors have preserved for us wealth consisting of the path which leads to the gaining of the light of the Self. If we meditate on all the preceptors who have come in this succession-line till today we shall receive a profusion of grace. Therefore a knowledge of *Guru-paraṁparā* is necessary for those who want to realize the truth of the Self.

In our *Guru-paraṁparā* the first Guru is Nārāyaṇa. Then come Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha, Śakti, Parāśara, Vyāsa, Śuka. So far, the succession was from father to son (*Putra-paraṁparā*). Śuka was a *jñānī* even at birth. Therefore from him started the succession from preceptor to disciple (*śiṣya-paraṁparā*).

Gauḍapāda after taking *sannyāsa* from *Śukācārya* remained stationed in the Self.

Now to continue the story: Candra Śarmā got down from the tree that was on the banks of the

Narmadā. He walked from there a little distance. He was very tired because he had spent several days and nights without food and sleep. He left the bundle of leaves which he had been carrying at a place and went to bed and slept soundly. During that time a goat came along and ate a portion of the bundle of leaves. The *Mahā-bhāṣya,* which is now extant, consists only of the uneaten portion of the leaves. The part that is missing in the *Mahā-bhāṣya* is known as *Aja-bhakṣita-bhāṣya* (the portion of the commentary which was eaten up by the goat). Candra Śarmā got up from his sleep. He saw that a portion of the bundle of leaves was missing. He came to know that a goat had eaten it. He tied up the leaves that were undamaged and, taking the bundle with him he reached Ujjayinī.

He went to the house of a *Vaiśya.* He laid himself down on the pial of the house and slept off. He was in deep sleep for a long time. Many days passed. The *Vaiśya* had a daughter. She saw Candra Śarmā and tried to wake him up. But he did not wake up. She realized that he was in an unconscious state without food. She thought within herself: "This person seems to be very brilliant. His life should be preserved." Immediately, following the medical science, she smeared over his body cooked rice crushed in buttermilk. The essence of the rice entered his body through the hair orifices. This was repeated every day. After some days Candra Śarmā woke up.

A technique like this is taught in our medical texts. Now-a-days the essence of food is injected into the body through a needle. This involves injury

and also creates a new orifice. The method taught in our medical texts consists in making the essence of food enter into the body naturally, making use of the hair orifices. In Kerala, even today there is a treatment similar to this; it is called *Navara-kiḻi*.

Candra Śarmā on waking up from sleep, looked around at first to see if the bundle of leaves was safe. He took the bundle and started reading. Thereupon, the house-holder *Vaiśya* stopped him saying: "My daughter took great effort to save your life. She wants to marry you. It is because of this that she took tender care of you." Candra Śarmā thought within himself: "Was it for this that I received instruction in grammar?" He told the house-holder that he had no intention of marrying. The householder insisted that Candra Śarmā should marry and he suggested that they should go to the court of the king of the place in order to settle their dispute. Both of them went to the palace of the king.

The king saw Candra Śarmā. Even before the *Vaiśya* could represent the case, he got an idea in his mind. "This young man seems to be a brilliant person. I am searching for a proper match for my daughter. I would give her in marriage to this young man." Thinking thus, he said to the stranger without listening to anything else: "Are you married? Will you marry my daughter?" Then he wanted to ascertain whether there was support for such a marriage in the *dharma-śāstra* and sent for his minister. The minister came. He too had a daughter who was of marriageble age. He thought within himself: "Oh! The king knows that I am in search of a match for my daughter. Now the time has come for giving my

daughter in marriage to this young man." Thus all the three, the *Vaiśya,* the king and the minister, wanted Candra Śarmā to marry their respective daughters. What was he to do? He married all the three and lived with them till he begot a son by each of them.

Only the first born son is *Dharmaja* (born of *dharma*). For the purpose of following the way of *dharma* from generation to generation, one son is enough. The rest are all *kāmaja-s,* i.e., born of desire. It is only the eldest son that has the eligibility to perform *karma.* The family property also goes to him alone. In Kerala, among the Nambūdiri Brahmins it is only the eldest son that has the right to property. Property is intended for the performance of *dharma.* The fitness for performing *dharma* belongs to the eldest son alone; therefore the family property goes only to him. If other sons are born, they need only to be protected and enabled to live. Is it not the case that a kingdom is inherited by the eldest son of a king? The other sons have no share in it. Similarly, the family property also goes to that son who is eligible to perform *dharma.* Therefore, only one son does the parent require.

After begetting one son from each of his wives Candra Śarmā left his house. Then he went in search of him who had taught him grammar. After visiting various places he met him at Badarikāśrama. He came to know that his teacher had become a *sannyāsin.* He too took *sannyāsa* from him. Thence he came to be known as Govinda Bhagavatpādācārya. The teachers from Śukā onwards are known as *Parivrājakas* (wandering monks).

While Govinda Bhagavatpāda was staying at Badarikāśrama, Vyāsa the preceptor and parent of Śukā, came there once. Govinda Bhagavatpādācārya met him and offered obeisance. Vyāsa addressed him thus: "For the purpose of writing a commentary on the Brahma-sūtra composed by me, Īśvara Himself is going to be born as an *Avatāra*. He will take *sannyāsa*. In conformity with the tradition in the world, there should be a teacher to initiate Him. You go to the banks of the Narmadā river and stay at the foot of the Aśvattha tree there. As soon as He meets you, you will initiate Him". Thus it was decided when the four teachers met at Badarikāśrama, namely Vyāsa, Śuka, Gauḍapāda and Govinda Bhagavatpāda. Govinda Bhagavatpāda came down from Badarikāśrama and reached the banks of the Narmadā.

The teacher who had taught grammar to Govinda in his previous *āśrama* had himself become the Vedāntic teacher initiating him into *sannyāsa*. The tree sitting on which he had learnt grammar in his *pūrvāśrama* (earlier stage in life) now gave the region of its foot as his dwelling-place. Govinda sat there in meditation awaiting the arrival of his Disciple.

Mahā-Viṣṇu felt immense joy beholding Naṭarāja in His heart-lotus; therefore Ādi Śeṣa could not bear to support Him. Starting with this incident and up to the point we have now reached, the work *Patañjali-vijaya* relates in great detail the line of preceptors preceding Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. Thereafter this work relates in brief the story of Śrī Śaṅkara. The first verse of this part begins with the words:

atrāntare nakragṛhītapadaḥ

In this part of the work the incidents related are: A crocodile catching hold of Śaṅkara's feet, Śaṅkara reaching the place where Govinda Bhagavatpāda was — his being initiated by Govinda, then his journey to Kāśī, his tour of victory (*dig-vijaya*), his composition of the commentary on the Brahma-sūtra, etc. The last verse in the Patañjali-vijaya is as follows:

govindadeśikam upāsya cirāya bhaktyā
tasmin sthite nijamahimni videhamuktyā
advaitabhāṣyam upakalpya diśo vijitya
kāñcīpure sthitim avāpa sa śaṅkarāryaḥ

[Patañjali carita viii, 71]

III

THE AVATĀRA OF ŚAṄKARA

When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave His teachings to Arjuna, He defined *yoga* as the state of one-ness with the supreme Self gained through the purification of the mind. The term *yoga* means joining or union. When we say of a person "He has good yoga" what we mean is that in his case there is a combination of good planets. Gaining union with good things is good *yoga*. Which is the best thing? It is of the nature of knowledge. Gaining union with it alone is the best *yoga*. The means to it is desireless action. What is gained through such action is called *karma-yoga*. All *yogas* constitute the true purport of the Veda. The Veda teaches the uninterrupted (*nirantaram*) union with the supreme Self as the final goal. *Antaram* means difference (*bheda*). *Nirantaram* means non-difference (*abheda*). The union which does not involve any difference is *antaraṅga-yoga*. It means union with knowledge which is the nature of the supreme Self without any difference. If there is gained one-ness then there is no separation. If there is even the least difference, that union will not be *nirantara*.

In the Brahmavallī of the *Taittirīya-upaniṣad* it is declared: Even if there is the least difference, there will be the fear that the union may be broken at any time.

udaramantaram kurute; atha tasya bhayam
bhavati;
tattveva bhayam viduṣo' manvānasya.

[Taittirīya-Upaniṣad, Brahmavallī]

If one is of the nature of That without any difference, then there will not be the least difference at any time. It is for gaining that union that the Vedas are the means. Thus the Lord Kṛṣṇa taught Arjuna:

imam vivasvate yogam proktavān aham avyayam,
vivasvān manave prāha manurikṣvākave' bravīt.
evam paramparāprāptam imam rājarṣayo viduḥ,
sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ paraṁtapa.

[Bhagavad-Gītā, iv, 1 and 2]

"This *yoga* formerly I taught Vivasvān. A long time has elapsed since then. If the persons who receive the teaching are supremely eligible, they will preserve it for ever. Since those who came after, had diminishing eligibility there was damage done to the teaching. This *yoga* which came down as a tradition began to decay because those who came later were not supremely eligible. I have now come to resuscitate it". Thus said the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

bahūni me vyatītāni janmāni tava cārjuna,
tānyaham veda sarvāṇi na tvam vettha paraṁtapa.

[Bhagavad-Gītā, iv, 5]

Arjuna was seized with a doubt. He asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "How do you know that you taught this *yoga* a long time ago?" The Lord replied: "I too have had many births; you also have been born again and again. I am aware of this; you are not."

The Lord Śiva and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are not different from each other. Both are one and the same. The *smārtas*[6] bear the sacred ash. They also are devoted to Viṣṇu. According to Advaita, there is no difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu. This is what all the scriptures teach: *śrutis, smṛtis, purāṇas,* etc. The teaching of our Ācārya is also the same. In the Bhagavad-Gītā too we see that Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed to Arjuna the cosmic form. That cosmic form is the form of Īśvara, i.e. Śiva. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

divyam dadāmi te cakṣuḥ paśya me yogam
aiśvaram.

[Bhagavad-Gītā, xi, 8]

"I give you the divine eye. I shall show you my form as Īśvara". The term Īśvara signifies the supreme Śiva. We find this in the *Amarakośa.* Mentioning the names of Śiva it says:

Īśvaraḥ śarva iśānaḥ

While mentioning the names of Viṣṇu and others the term Īśvara is not mentioned. Even in ordinary usage, the temple of Parameśvara is referred to as the Īśvara-temple and that of Viṣṇu as the Perumāll-temple. It is the god with three eyes that is called Īśvara. In the *Raghuvaṁśa,* Kālidāsa makes this significant statement:

6. Smārta literally means a follower of smṛtis (traditional codes); especially the followers of Śaṅkara's Vedānta are called Smārtas.

hariryathaikaḥ puruṣottamaḥ smṛtaḥ
maheśvaras tryambaka eva nāparaḥ

[Raghuvaṁśa, iii, 49]

In the *Vikramorvaśīya* there is the following verse [i, 1]:

vedānteṣu yamāhurekapuruṣam vyāpya sthitam rodasī
yasminnīśvara ityananyaviṣayaḥ śabdo yathārthākṣaraḥ,
antaryaśca mumukṣubhirniyamita-prāṇādibhirmṛgyate
sa sthāṇuḥ sthirabhaktiyogasulabho niśreyasāyāstu naḥ

It is stated in this verse that the one who is devoted to Him to Whom the word Īśvara applies completely, becomes the receiver of His Grace. The term Puruṣottama refers only to Hari. The expression Īśvara applies only to the god with three eyes. Thus declares the great poet Kālidāsa. In this manner, we have seen that according to the *Amarakośa,* empirical usage, and the great poet, the term Īśvara signifies only Paramaśiva. It is that form of Īśvara that is the cosmic form.

kālo'smi lokakṣayakṛt pravṛddhaḥ

[Bhagavad-Gītā, xi, 32]

From this statement we know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed the form which destroys the entire world. It is said there that all the warring leaders of the Kaurava forces enter the open mouths of the Cosmic Form with many faces and are caught between Their terrible teeth. Therefore it is clear that the Cosmic Form assumed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the form of Parameś-

vara. Also it is known that Īśvara and Kṛṣṇa, are non-different. Later in the text at one place the Lord says to Arjuna thus:

īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānām hṛdeśe' rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārudhāni māyayā
tameva śaraṇaṁ gaccha sarvabhāvena bhārata,
tatprasādāt parāṁ śāntiṁ sthānaṁ prāpsyasi śāśvatam

[Bhagavad-Gītā, xviii, 61-62]

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says here: "By His grace the supreme peace will be gained. In no other manner can one get rid of egoity". When Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses the term Īśvara, the pronoun He employs is 'He'. In other places He says 'I'. Thus when revealing His cosmic form and also when speaking about the gaining of the supreme release, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes use of the word Īśvara. It is Īśvara that grants the supreme peace. Realizing the non-difference of God-head the Smārtas go to Viṣṇu temples as well as to Śiva temples. Although they wear the sacred ash and *rudrakṣa* beads they go to Viṣṇu temples with great devotion.

The Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is non-different from Īśvara. As already pointed out He said to Arjuna: "A long time ago I taught this *yoga* to Vivasvān. Now it has declined; therefore I have come again." At another place in the Bhagavad-Gītā, He declares:

yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati bhārata,
abhyuthānam adharmasya tadātmānam sṛjāmyaham.

[Bhagavad-Gītā, iv, 7]

"Whenever virtue declines and wickedness is on the ascendent then, O Arjuna, I body Myself forth". We have already observed the Lord's statement to Arjuna: "Thus I have had many births. You too have had repeated births. I know them all, to you they are not known. You are Nara (Man); I am Nārāyaṇa". Nara and Nārāyaṇa were performing *tapas* (austerities) at Badarinārāyaṇa. In order to disturb their *tapas* the gods sent to that place heavenly damsels. The damsels went there and danced before them in order to disturb their *tapas*. Seeing this, Nara got angry and uttered the sound "*hūm.*" Nārāyaṇa gave a slap on His thigh. From that there appeared thousands of damsels who were more beautiful than the heavenly ones. The heavenly damsels got ashamed and went back.

Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa who assumed several *avatāras* took on the Cosmic Form while giving instruction to Arjuna, being non-different from Īśvara. It is by the Grace of Īśvara that *jñāna* (true knowledge) arises. It has been stated:

ārogyam bhāskarād i cchejjñānadātā maheśvaraḥ

(Desire to gain health from the sun-god! The giver of knowledge is Maheśvara). Īśvara is of the nature of knowledge. It is the great Īśvara that is said to be omniscient (*sarvajña*). The Amarakośa says the same thing. The Veda declares that Īśvara is the presiding deity of all *vidyās* (sciences). When he becomes the Protector of the world, the supreme Self remains as Īśvara too.

The yoga of the non-difference of the *jīva* and *Brahman* got lost. In order to resuscitate it Śrī

Kṛṣṇa incarnated Himself. That *avatāra* took place towards the end of the Dvāpara-yuga. After the Kali-yuga commenced, again that *yoga* got diminished. There arose seventy-two false cults. They became fearful and dangerous. Phenomena such as these always look strong at the beginning. Afterwards they will subside of their own accord. Īśvara-candra Vidyāsāgar in Bengal started a movement for the marriage of widows. His efforts were pervasive and persistent at the beginning, but now the movement is slowly losing ground. Such phenomena always appear very strong at the beginning. Then they subside. All erroneous things belong to this category. Because *Kali* is the *yuga* of unrighteousness, false cults arose with great vigour. The supreme purport of the Vedas is that one should gain union with the Lord of all beings who is the Repository of compassion. Even if there is least difference there will be fear. This is what Advaita declares. The faith in Advaita declined in the Kali-yuga. In the Kṛta-yuga it was all-pervasive. Then in the Dvāpara-yuga it diminished a little but in the Kali-yuga there appeared unrighteousness with all its force. Seventy-two cults proliferated. The Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave to Arjuna instruction in *jñāna* for some time. At other times he ruled a kingdom. He engaged Himself in the various activities obtaining for achieving this purpose. On behalf of the five Pāṇḍavas, He went as an emissary to the court of their enemy. Thus while doing various things connected with governance, He taught *jñāna* only at one time. In the Kali-yuga such a thing will not be enough. The teacher should devote all his

time for spreading knowledge. It is where there is dense darkness that one should light a bright lamp.

"It is written in the books that only in the Kali-yuga unrighteousness will be rampant. Then why study the Veda? And why should there be restrictions such as 'this is prohibited, that is prohibited'?" Thus object some people. For what purpose did the authors of those texts write in that manner? Anyhow there is going to be decay. What for are these injunctions?

Consulting astrology is wrong, they say. It is unnecessary to know in advance that difficulties will arise after several days and to feel agony about it even now. If happiness is in store and if one knows about it well in advance, one should be expecting it, and when it comes one would not be able to appreciate its excellence. Only if happiness comes all on a sudden one would be overjoyed. Therefore, either for the future ill effects or for good results astrology is unnecessary. Let us do what we are doing. When the results come we shall see. Therefore one should not consult astrology in order to know in advance. Similarly, why should we know that Kali-yuga is about to come? Thus there is an objection. What is the use of saying anything in advance and uttering a warning? Thus the objectors ask. In a village there is great fear of theft. The policemen go to that village and tell the people: "There is a possibility of danger from theft and so all people should be on their guard". The authors who give the warning are like these policemen. The objectors are like those villagers who think "the thieves are going to come; how can we be on our guard?" and throw away their properties on

the street. If care is taken and there is vigilance, at least some people may get protection. Knowing that unrighteousness is going to come one should be afraid of it, and take greater care. If any person dares to stand firm against the flood of unrighteousness in the Kali-yuga he will reap rewards much greater than those gained in the other *yugas*. It is only when one stands firm when there is opposition that one becomes great. Without minding the laughter and loose talk of the world, one should carry out one's religious duties with courage. Only thus will the purification of the mind be achieved. It has been said: *kaliḥ sādhuḥ* (the Kali-yuga is good). The result gained in the other *yugas* through extensive *tapas* can be gained in the *Kali-yuga* through very little effort. In this *yuga* God waits, thinking 'There is no one who comes to Me.' If anyone goes to Him He showers on him His infinite Grace. In the other *yugas*, since many people go to Him He does not have time to give them individual attention. But in *Kali* He bestows on His devotee Grace out of profound compassion. Therefore the Vedas teach us the disciplines in order that we may be vigilant and careful. If even a little of these disciplines is practised, the fruit will be great.

At the beginning of the *Kali-yuga* the flood of unrighteousness rushed in all its fury. Parameśvara resolved to stem that flood and He incarnated Himself in a Brāhmin family. He who is the Head of all knowledge, that Sadāśiva Himself, came for the purpose of imparting knowledge. Instead of sending others, He wanted that He Himself should come and therefore He made His advent into the world having as His mission the spreading of knowledge. In the

avatāras of Viṣṇu it is the *kṣatriya-dharma* that is prominent.

Born in a Brāhmin family, the Ācārya showed the faults and errors of the other faiths and schools of thought. The Śaṅkara-vijayas say that at that time seventy-two faiths were extant. Now we can know only about schools like Buddhism, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, etc. Buddhism is prevalent in other countries. In the country of its birth, namely India, it is not very evident. Of other faiths we read in the books. About some of the faiths we discover details from other countries, from books and from the ruins of temples. Had not Śrī Bhagavatpāda (i.e., Śaṅkara) taken his *avatāra* it should not have been so difficult to know about these faiths. Of the seventy-two faiths, there is not even one now in India. The Ācārya rejected all of them. A few of them he allowed to migrate to other countries. He did not want any of them to prevail in the land of Bhārat (i.e., India) which is devoted to the path of *dharma*. He thought that those other faiths may do some good in lands where atheism and inhumanity prevailed, because those faiths also stand for the development of spiritual qualities.[7]

After the *avatāra* of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya the influence of the religions that were prevalent began to decline. The cults and religions that we now find came into being after his time. The religions which were antecedent to his time have all gone out. Great Ācāryas came after Śrī Śaṅkara, namely, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Kṛṣṇacaitanya and others. None

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7. The reason why some cults were allowed to go out of this country was that in those countries where atheism etc., were prevalent, these might do some good.

of them have rendered any religion that preceded them obsolete. No one can say that after the advent of Rāmānujācārya Advaita has ceased to be. The same is true in regard to the appearance of Madhvācārya. After him Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita have not disappeared. But it is very clear that after our Ācārya's time all the cult-traditions that were before him have perished. It is because of this that Śrī Śaṅkara has been celebrated as the World Teacher. He resolved to clear this *Karma-bhūmī* (i.e. India) of the bad influence of all the antecedent cults. And accordingly he fulfilled this resolve. Those teachers who came after him could not do so. Each teacher is followed by some sections of people who practise disciplines as taught by him. Thus it is evident that the cults and religions which are present now came into being after the Ācārya's time.

The religions that are prevalent in other countries have adopted some good points from the Veda. Rāmānujācārya and Madhvācārya accepted only the expressions which are related to Viṣṇu. Śrīkaṇṭhācārya took over terms relating to Śiva. The Buddhists accepted some aspects. It is only our Ācārya that considered the entire teaching of the Veda as authoritative. The others did not pay heed to the Veda as a whole. It is only our Ācārya that regarded all the Veda as *pramāṇa* on the basic principle 'All is one', 'All is acceptable'. This is Advaita. In order to gain that Advaita-experience, one has to perform the rituals as taught in the Veda. The greater the effort we make in performing the Vedic disciplines the easier will become the accomplishment of Advaita. Being non-different if we now perform the disciplines

then we shall gain the non-different experience. If we remain as different here, then there too there would be difference. Why all these restrictions? In what form are they? Thus some people may think. We are in great bondage. We have gathered a big load through committing sins on account of passions such as desire, anger, etc. How should we get rid of this bondage?

If a trickster is bound to a post with ropes and if a screen is drawn to hide him, in a few moments he would appear bound to another post. There are a few kinds of tricks which are needed to accomplish this. When he is bound, at first if he keeps his arms in a certain extended position then after the screen is drawn he would withdraw his arms extricating himself from the pole and tie himself up to the other pole. If one wants to be released from a tie-up, if one is tied more tightly he would get released from the first tie-up in the same way. For loosening the bondage of sins that are within us we must apply the restrictions consisting in the performance of the duties pertaining to *varṇas* and *āśramas.*

nistryaiguṇye pathi vicaratām ko vidhiḥ
ko niṣedhaḥ

If that bondage were not there this restriction would not be necessary. It is to gain the state of freedom from that bondage that all these disciplines should be gone through. Taking castor-oil is difficult but why do we submit ourselves to that difficulty? It is because we want to get rid of the uneasiness in the body. The more we tighten up these restrictions the easier will be the gaining of freedom from that great bondage.

If we perform our allotted duties in this manner the state of Advaita will eventually come to us. This is the teaching of our Ācārya. He did not exclude anything. Performance of *dharma, jñāna* (knowledge), devotion to Śiva-Viṣṇu, all of them are acceptable according to the Ācārya. The other religious teachers stressed one or the other of these disciplines and made propaganda for it. Nothing is known of such teachers who lived before the Ācārya. There are those who came after him. In the cults that prevailed before the Ācārya's advent there were many forms of severe disciplines and many followers who stuck to them. There were in those cults several restrictions also but because they did not accept the entire Veda as authoritative those cults perished. Our Ācārya followed all the sacred texts, viz., *śruti, smṛti, purāṇas,* etc. without excluding any of their teachings. The Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad speaks of Īśvara as the one who taught the Veda to the creator Brahmā.

yo brahmāṇam vidadhāti pūrvam yo vai
vedāṁśca prahiṇoti tasmai

He who was before all the deities is Brahman. He created Brahmā. Thus says the Nārāyaṇa-upaniṣad.

tridhā hitam paṇibhirguhyamānam

He gave supreme auspiciousness. That supreme auspiciousness is knowledge. He who gives that knowledge is Śiva. He who occasions that auspiciousness is the Supreme Brahman. All is He.

atikalyāṇarūpatvānnityakalyāṇasaṁśrayāt
[Maṅgala-pāṭa-śloka]

Śiva, kalyāṇa, maṅgala, śubha — all is He. Śrī Ācārya is of the nature of the supreme auspiciousness. In order to teach again the Advaita of yore, an aspect of Īśvara took *avatāra.* In the Kali-yuga there will inevitably be *adharma.* Even so there should be great protection afforded to the world. Our Ācārya thought: "Let the other religious traditions be there in order to yield results to their respective followers according to their eligibility". Why should there be many religions? They are for those who are not competent to follow the path to the supreme *mokṣa.* Yet our Ācārya saw to it by his grace that the supreme truth would perpetually be there without disappearing. In our house there is water in several places but it will not be pure in all places. In the well it will be pure. One should not render all water impure. Some water will necessarily be impure. Were it not so, all would become impure. Similarly, there are some religious cults. One can also go through them and gain *mokṣa* slowly and eventually. The path taught by the Ācārya is the straight one. The others involve certain problems and difficulties. This point has been made in the *Sūta-saṁhitā* and also in the *Vaidyanātha-dīkṣitīya.* The Bhagavatpāda took his *avatāra* in order to remove all anti-vedic cults and to establish Advaita as the *siddhānta* through a comprehensive inclusion of the paths of meditation, work and knowledge. He made a tour of victory. In reality, it was he alone that made such a tour. He lived on earth for only thirty-two years. If we deduct the first ten years of boy-hood, there were only twenty-two years left during which time he toured the country from the Himālayas to the Setu (i.e. Rāmeśvaram) three times.

This was his *dig-vijaya*. If we go to Badari-nārāyaṇa we hear his name uttered by people there. There is evidence to show that Śrī Ācārya visited that place. Here in the south, in Kālaḍi, similarly there are evidences. In this manner there are in several places signs of his having visited them and performed several acts of Grace by way of refuting the false religions. When we consider all these it becomes certain that he was an *avatāra*. All the Vedas and Smṛtis are authorities; all forms of the deity are acceptable; the topics found in all the schools are there in Advaita. The Ācārya established such a *siddhānta* by his tour of victory. So it is that he has been given the appellation 'World Teacher'. Over and above the Veda there has not come into being anything new. In the various cult-traditions one or the other aspects gets emphasis. Śrī Ācārya established the six cults (*ṣaṇmata*). Some people choose one of them and hate the others. In the hymns composed by the Ācārya viz., Śivānanda-laharī, Saundarya-laharī, etc. Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita have been taught. At the beginning, there should be devotion (*bhakti*). At that time we are the servant of God. Afterwards God becomes our inner ruler. This view is Viśiṣṭādvaita. The teachers who came after Śaṅkara retained one view and rejected the other. They did not realize that all the paths lead to the same goal. All culminate in Advaita. When we reflect on the entire course of history, there has been no other instance of such an all-comprehensive *siddhānta*. With the Truth as the only basis Śaṅkara won over all the various cults in a very short time and established Advaita. There has been no other instance of a teacher who has accomplished so much in such a brief span of life.

As regards the date of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya there are differences of opinion among scholars. For us it is the Grace that is important. It is enough if we understand the state of things before his *dig-vijaya*, the situation that prevailed after him, and what has to be done hereafter. And what is the means that should be adopted?

Many writers have related the biography of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. There is a work called the Mādhavīya Śaṅkara-vijaya. There are other biographies such as the Ānandagirīya Śaṅkara-vijaya, the Cidvilāsīya Śaṅkara-vijaya, the Keraḷīya Śaṅkara-vijaya, the Vyāsācarīya Śaṅkara-vijaya, etc. Even as there are differences among the versions of the Rāmāyaṇa, there are some differences among the biographies of the Ācārya. We must consider as true those points which are common to all of them. Whatever is stated in the different Śaṅkara-vijayas we must accept if it is good. We may accept as true whatever is free from contradiction.

We have already referred to the Patañjali-vijaya and the information that we gather from it about our Ācārya. Besides the Śaṅkara-vijayas there are other texts in which the story of our Ācārya is related. Let us turn to some of them.

There is a great work by name Śiva-rahasya. It is an *Itihāsa*. The term *Itihāsa* means an ancient lay. The expression *iti* and *ha* and *asa* means 'thus it was.' *Itihāsa* belongs to the category of the Purāṇas.

The Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata are *Itihāsas*. The Śiva-rahasya too belongs to this category. The Rāmāyaṇa consists of twenty-four thousand *granthas*. A *grantha* consists of thirty-two letters. The *śloka* (verse) *śuklāmbaradharam*, etc. which is in the *anuṣṭup* meter is one *grantha*. Making each of the letters of the Gāyatrī the first letter for one thousand *ślokas*, twenty-four thousand *ślokas* were composed. In the Mahābhārata there are one lakh *granthas* (one lakh is one hundred thousand). The Śiva-rahasya too consists of one lakh *granthas*. It was composed by one Jaigīṣavya. Of the Purāṇas and Itihāsas there are thus three, in each of which there are one lakh *granthas*. They are: Mahābhārata, Śiva-rahasya and Skānda-purāṇa.

In the Śiva-rahasya there are twelve *aṁśas* (sections). It is entirely devoted to the relating of things connected with Īśvara. In the ninth *aṁśa* the lives of devotees are given. There are the stories of the sixty-three Śaiva saints (Nāyanmārs) and the story of Haradattācārya, etc. In the same section is given the story of Śrī Bhagavatpāda who was an incarnation of a part of Śiva.

Our Ācārya acted the part of a *bhakta* (devotee). Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, and others behaved in ways consistent with their respective *avatāras*. Similarly, Śrī Bhagavatpāda too behaved like a devotee performing *pūjā* and other disciplines.

The story of our Ācārya is given in the sixteenth chapter of the ninth section. The entire life from his *avatāra* to his *siddhi* is related there.

There is the following verse in that chapter:

keraḷe śaśalagrāme viprapatnyāṁ madaṁśajaḥ
bhaviṣyati mahādevi śaṅkarā khyo dvijottamaḥ

It is reckoned that the *avatāra* occurred about two thousand years after the beginning of Kali. Towards the end of the story it is stated that Śrī Śaṅkarācārya went to Kailāsa, brought from there five *liṅgas*, viz., *Bhoga-liṅga, Yoga-liṅga, Vara-linga, Mukti-linga* and *Mokṣa-liṅga* and worshipped them. As a result of this he gained victory over the false cults. This is stated in that work. Since the Śiva-rahasya is devoted to the extolling of the greatness of Śiva, it says that Śaṅkarācārya's worship of the five *liṅgas* was the cause of the success of his *dig-vijaya*. The Patañjali-vijaya is available in print but not the Śiva-rahasya. A person who wished to print the Śiva-rahasya brought with him several manuscripts to the Mutt. In all those manuscripts there is related the life of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. Some of the commentators of the Śaṅkara-vijayas quote a few verses from the Śiva-rahasya. As already mentioned, the life of Śrī Ācārya is given in the sixteenth chapter of the ninth section in the Śiva-rahasya. It is stated in that work that when Parameśvara gave the five *liṅgas* to Śrī Ācārya, He gave the command: "Worship the *liṅgas* with *bilva* leaves three times a day."

It is for the purpose of the continued performance of this worship that devotees during occasions like weddings make offerings to Candramaulīśvara. Some people stop doing this for miscellaneous reasons. The common property of us all should not be lost. If in a temple the priest does not perform his duties pro-

perly, we should go to the temple every day for worshipping the deity and then the priest will correct himself out of fear. If we do not go to the temple, then the priest will behave as he likes. Whether the priest does his duty well or not, we should go to the temple. If we set aside what has come down from beginningless time, from generation to generation, then we cannot introduce something in its stead anew. Whatever be the differences of opinion, we must consider the temple to be our property and do what we should do. Well-to-do people perform their *pūjā* in their houses. They offer worship with plenty of accessories like the material for *abhiṣeka,* flower-garlands, scented sticks, sandal-paste, etc. If a person who is poor performs the pūjā he will do it with bilva leaves. To whom does the *pūjā* of Candramaulīśvara belong? It belongs to all people of the four classes and is meant to do them all good. This *pūjā* is not a new invention. Removing the obstacles that lay like thorns on the path of the Veda and integrating the entire country and making it one family, Śrī Ācārya made this *pūjā* as the common property of this family. Candramaulīśvara-pūjā is common to all. If a *pūjā* is to be performed with the cooperation of all people, how grand should it be? The manner in which it is done at present is not enough. In this country there are princes, land-lords, rich people and poor folk. The *pūjā* performed by a single prince will be of a special nature. But this *pūjā* that is conducted for the good of all, should it not be a grand one? This *pūjā* which has been observed so far should continue to be performed hereafter too. The *liṅga-pūjā* instituted by Śrī Ācārya should continue to be performed. If he

had remained in one place and performed this *pūjā* it would have ended with one generation. If it is to continue perpetually there should be some insignia. If a great person starts alone and travels, wherever he goes, he will get many great things accomplished. Since Śrī Ācārya was omniscient he did many great things. We who have succeeded him are like his images. Our efforts are directed to make people remember Śrī Ācārya and to convey an idea of his greatness to those who may not know him. Those who behold the statue of Muthuswami Ayyar (a well-known judge of the High court of Madras) are reminded of him. Similarly, it is our wish that through us, all people should be reminded of Śrī Ācārya. Our entourage consists of elephants, camels and other accessories. Sometimes I feel like going away, leaving them all behind. Immediately the question arises as to who will do the Śrī Candramaulīśvara-pūjā? The tradition which has come down without a break as a result of Śrī Ācārya's command will come to stop. This thought will offset the earlier feeling. Then there arose the following doubt: Was Śrī Śaṅkarācārya accompanied by such an entourage? Did I not refer to the statue of Muthuswami Ayyar? It represents the judge as seated, donning official dress, etc. A man who looked at it at midnight on a particular date, saw the statue in the same way, i.e., in formal dress, etc. Does it mean that the judge was wearing this attire at midnight also? The purpose of the statue is only to perpetuate the memory of Muthuswami Ayyar. At one time the statue of V. Krishnaswami Ayyar (another judge of the High-court of Madras) had to be protected by the stationing of

guards near it. When he was alive there was no need for such protection. Protection became necessary because he is no longer alive.

We are here only to preserve the memory of Śrī Ācārya. In order to preserve this tradition there should be the appropriate insignia. Thus I came to the conclusion that somehow I must bear with all these paraphernalia. These are required to fulfil the command of Śrī Ācārya without a break. Paramaśiva's injunction to the Ācārya that the Liṅga should be worshipped three times every day with bilva leaves should be carried out at all times. The paraphernalia are required for this purpose. This *pūjā* belongs to all. It should continue to be performed without any interruption.

IV

THE FIVE LIṄGAS

Of the books in which the biography of Śrī Ācārya is to be found, other than the Śaṅkara-vijayas, I have already referred to two: the Patañjali-vijaya and the Śiva-rahasya. Both these books are concerned with other matters. In the middle they relate the story of Śrī Ācārya. Similar to these books there are a few others also.

A section in the Brahmānda-purāṇa is called the Mārkandeya-saṁhitā. In the third sub-section of this, the biography of Śrī Ācārya is to be found. Here there is a special information that is given. In the Śiva-rahasya when Śrī Ācārya's life is described, we saw that the last verse relates to the five *Liṅgas*. At what places Śrī Ācārya consecrated these *Liṅgas* is not mentioned there. It is not mentioned anywhere else. It is only the Mārkandeya-saṁhitā that gives this information.

The Mukti-liṅga was consecrated at Badarikāśrama. At Nīlakaṇṭhakṣetra in Nepal the Vara-liṅga was consecrated. Śrī Ācārya consecrated the Mokṣa-liṅga at Cidaṁbaram and the Bhoga-liṅga at Śṛṅgagiri. He consecrated the Yoga-liṅga at Kāñcīpuram.

śivaliṅgam pratiṣṭāpya cidaṁbarasabhātale
mokṣadam sarvajantūnām bhuvanatraya-sundaram
muktiliṅgam tu kedāre nīlakaṇṭhe vareśvaram
kāñcyām śrikāmakoṭau tu yogaliṅgam anuttamam
śrīśāradākhyapīṭhe śivaliṅgam bhoganāmakam cakre

[Mārkandeya-saṁhitā]

The greatness of Śrī Ācārya and his consolidation of Advaita are referred to in many works besides the Śaṅkara-vijayas. The poet Śrī-harṣa has written a poem called the Naiṣadha. At one place in this poem it would seem as though the poet refers to Śrī Bhagavatpāda. Śrī-harṣa had intense devotion to Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. In his poem he had used several devices which may be called knots distinctive of great poetry. Poetic expertise of different types are to be seen in the Naiṣadha.

Śrī-harṣa's father was one Śrī-hīra, his mother was Māmalla-devī. He refers to them in every chapter of the work.

His father was a scholar attached to a King's court. One day a poet from another country came to this court. By virtue of his skill and ability he won a victory over Śrī-harṣa's father. On account of depression caused by defeats, the father died. The mother survived. When the father passed away Śrī-harṣa was a small child. His father had taught his mother the Cintāmaṇi-mantra. Those who repeated this *mantra* would obtain the grace of Sarasvatī, the goddess of

learning. The mother taught this *mantra* to her child. The child was always repeating this *mantra*. One day when the mother was lying down the child got on to her chest and was playing. The mother knew that according to the technique of *vāmācāra*, if someone repeats a *mantra* seated on a corpse the *mantra* would yield its greatest result. So she immediately cut her own neck. Her purpose was to make her child grow in wisdom and attain a status which would not be equalled by any other. She did not mind losing her own life. That his mother had died, the child did not know. He continued repeating the *mantra* seated on her body. As a result of this the end of the *mantra-japa* was accomplished. He then became a great poet.

Śrī-harṣa in his poem Naiṣadha has given an account of the *cintāmaṇi-mantra* and of the technique relating to its repetition. He has also stated that he had been endowed with the gift of poesy by virtue of the strength of the *cintāmaṇi-mantra*.

When the Damayantī *svayaṁvara* (choosing a bridegroom) took place, Sarasvatī Herself came, in order to show to her the kings that had come for the *svayaṁvara*. After the marriage between Nala and Damayantī, Sarasvatī showered Her Grace on the couple. While giving an account of this episode Śrī-harṣa says that the Goddess imparted to them the *cintāmaṇi-mantra* and explained its greatness and the technique relating to it.

Since Śrī-harṣa had obtained his poetic strength through the *cintāmaṇi-mantra* he was able to make use

of several subtle devices and difficult techniques in his poem the Naiṣadha. He himself has said so.

granthagranthiriha kvacit kvacidapi nyāsi
prayatnānmāyā
prājñam manyamanā haṭhena paṭhitī
māsminkhalaḥ khelatu
śraddhārādha guruślaṭhīkṛta-dṛḍhagranthiḥ
samāsādaya-
tvetatkāvyararormi majjana sukhavyāsajjanaṁ
sajjanaḥ

[Naiṣadhakavya, xxii, 3]

The meaning of the verse is: "In this work I have placed on purpose many knots. One must approach a *guru* with faith and learn from him to untie these knots, otherwise this is not possible. Those who wish to understand must seek a *guru,* worship him and bathe in the ambrosia of poesy. They who are egoistic are evil, cannot understand this. If one thinks that he can read it with persistence and understand by himself he will find that it is impossible. He who is virtuous must offer devotion to the *guru* and understand by his grace." This is what Śrī-harṣa has said in this verse. In his poem this is the only verse which is easy to understand. The rest are all very difficult. Śrī-harṣa had devotion to the Ācarya and faith in Advaita. He wrote a work called Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādya. He wrote this work in order to prove that there is no *rasa* apart from Advaita. The truth can be only one. If there are two they cannot be true. Raising all possible objections to the truth of the One — objections which are put forward through bad logic and false reason — Śrī-harṣa has given fitting answers in this work.

śabdārtha nirvacanakhaṇḍanayā nayantaḥ
sarvatra nirvacanabhāvam akharva garvān
dhīrā yathoktamapi kīravadetaduktvā
lokeṣu digvijayakautukamātanudhvam.

[Khaṇḍana-khāṇḍa-khādya, i, 3]

In this verse Śrī-harṣa has stated: "Those who are brave can accomplish a tour of victory if they are able to repeat what I have said here (in this work) like a parrot." A great teacher, Vedānta-Deśika, wrote a work entitled Śatadūṣaṇī in support of Viśiṣṭ-ādvaita. In this work he has selected eighty topics from Advaita and twenty from Dvaita and has criticised them. He too has a verse in his work similar to the one of Śrī-harṣa cited above.

prācīmupetya padavīm yatirājadṛṣṭām
tatsannikṛṣṭamapi vāmatayāśrayantaḥ
prajñā yathoditamidaṁ śukavatpaṭhantah
pracchannabauddhavijaye parito yatadhvam

The meaning of this verse is: "In order to gain victory over crypto-buddhists it is enough if one repeats like a parrot what has been stated in this work". The term crypto-buddhists here refers obviously to the Advaitins. Vedānta Deśika says that the conquest of only Advaitins can be accomplished but Śrī-harṣa declares that a tour of victory can be made. I have referred to this only to show that those who come after Śrī-harṣa have copied from him.

puṇya śloko nalo rājā puṇyaśloko yudhiṣṭhiraḥ
puṇyaślokā ca dvaidehī puṇyaśloko janārdanaḥ

[Prātha-smaranam]

Nala is said to be a *puṇya-śloka* (i.e., one of good repute). In the verse that is repeated early morning

his name occurs. Naiṣadha which relates his story is a virtuous story. Why should we think of the great ones? If we think of those who are absolutely pure and virtuous, fear in us and the tendency to do evil etc. will get reduced. If we think of them at least at that moment, our mind will become peaceful. If we think of them for a long time, then to that extent we can enjoy peace. The more we remember them the greater will be our peace. That peace will remain for ever. The term *puṇya-śloka* refers to such great ones. If we think of them our intellect will function in the direction shown by them. If we listen to their story we shall achieve great things. Therefore Śrī-harṣa wrote the story of that *puṇya-śloka,* i.e., Nala.

The time for Damayantī's *svayaṁvara* came. The Devas came to know of this. They also knew that Damayantī was in love with Nala but they wanted to marry Damayantī. They sent Nala as their emissary to her. Nothing turned out of this. Then Agni, Yama, Varuṇa, Indra, these four put on the guise of Nala. They sat in the *svayaṁvara* hall next to Nala. There were assembled also kings from other countries. Goddess Sarasvatī Herself accompanied Damayantī and gave details about each king. Speaking of *svyaṁvara,* a thought comes to my memory. In the Raghuvaṁśa the *svayaṁvara* of Indumati is mentioned. She married King Aja. Kālidāsa, the great poet, has written about Indumatī's *svayaṁvara.* She went on seeing each one of the assembled kings. The poet has given a comparison to Indumatī who was moving among the row of kings. The comparison is that she was like the flame of a lamp.

saṁcāriṇī dīpaśikheva rātrau yaṁ yaṁ vyatīyāya patiṁvarā sā
narendramārgāṭṭa iva prapede vivarṇabhāvam sasa bhūmipālaḥ
[Raghuvaṁśa, iv, 67]

Many men are seated. We take a lamp with us, and when we go beyond one of them he becomes shrowded in darkness. It is the place where the lamp is that will be illuminated. Similarly, the kings who had not yet seen Indumatī were seated with hope and bright faces. If Indumatī passed a king, at once his face would become sad. The face of the person in front of whom she was standing would shine very brightly. That is why the poet compares the princess here with the flame of a lamp.

Like Indumatī, Damayantī went on seeing the kings one after the other. Sarasvatī who was accompanying her gave details about each suitor. Damayantī was all the time thinking of Nala. She was determined to marry him alone. The other kings had only come to the assembly of their own accord.

Damayantī came to the place where the gods disguised as Nala were seated. Along with those four pseudo-Nalas there was also the real Nala seated. Seeing them Damayantī stood in wonder. If she garlanded anyone of the pseudo-Nalas her *pātivratya* (fidelity to the chosen consort) would be affected. What to do? Should not Sarasvatī tell her the truth? If she informed the state of things that obtained, it would show lack of courtesy. If she did not inform, it would be an untruth. Therefore while standing before each of the gods she spoke in such a way that

the meaning would apply to both, to that particular god and Nala. This she did by using expressions with double meaning. When they came to the place where the real Nala was seated she spoke in such a manner again with double meaning that the statement would apply to all the gods and Nala. This statement is referred to as *pañcanalīya.* Is it difficult for Sarasvatī to speak in that manner? Even those who have gained Her Grace do not find it difficult in using such devices.

Damayantī at that moment was in a fix not knowing who among the five was the real Nala. In this context there is the following verse:

sāptuṁ prayacchati na paksacatuṣṭaye tāṁ
tallābha śaṁsini na pañcamakoṭimātre
śraddhāṁ dadhe niṣadharāḍvimatau matānām
advaitatattva iva satyatare' pi lokaḥ
[Naiṣadha-kavya, xiii, 36]

In India five schools of philosophy are stated to be important ones. They are Śaṅkhya, Pātañjala or Yoga, Pāñcarātra, Veda and Pāśupata.

Śaṅkhya is now not prevalent. Pātañjala is the yoga-school taught by Patañjali Mahārṣi. Pāñcarātra is a Vaiṣṇava school. Rāmānuja's system is included in it. Veda stands for Advaita which was taught by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. Pāśupata is a Śaiva school. Puṣpadanta has the following verse in his Śiva-mahimna-stotra:

trayī sāṁkhyam yogaḥ paśupatimataṁ
vaiṣṇavamiti ca
prabhinne prasthāne paramidamadaḥ
pathyamiti ca

rucīnāṁ vaicitrayādṛjukuṭilanānāpathajuṣām
nṛṇām eko gamyastvamasi payasām
arṇava iva
[verse 7]

In our Vedic tradition there is the worship of Viṣṇu as well as the worship of Śiva. From the Tantras Rāmānuja accepted the Vaiṣṇava alone.

Damayantī's inability to recognize the real Nala on account of delusion is like getting confused without recognizing Advaita which is superior to the many schools in the world. Thus says the poet Śrī-harṣa.

Just as among the aforesaid five schools, Advaita is superior to the rest, even so the real Nala is to the other four pseudo-Nalas. It is clear that here Śrī-harṣa expresses through his comparison his devotion to the Ācārya and to Advaita.

He describes Advaita as *satya-tara*; *tara* means superior. It is the highest truth. There is then something which is the lower truth. In the other traditions there is no difference between the truth of Parameśvara and the truth of other things. There is nothing like higher and lower among them. There is nothing which is *tara.* In this context we shall briefly discuss the topic of truth (*satya*).

Our Ācārya has divided truth into three categories. He has stated that in the Upaniṣads we come across a fourfold classification of categories: (1) *pāramārthika-satya* (absolute reality), (2) *vyāvahārika-satya* (empirical reality), (3) *prātibhāsika-satya* (apparent reality), (4) *asatya* (unreality). Of these the

absolute reality is of the nature of Śiva. Śrī Ācārya declares in the Daśaślokī:

tadekovaśiṣṭaḥ śivaḥ kevaloham

Here it is stated that Śiva is the absolute Reality. Empirical reality is what we now experience as the world. If the lid of a round box lies on the ground we may mistake it for a rupee-coin. That is apparent reality. It seems to be so for some time. Similar is the nature of dream. Unreality is what never is. The barren woman's son, the horns of a horse, etc. are not seen at any time. These are unreal. The *yoga-śāstra* refers to them as *vikalpas* (unrealities).

Śabdajñānānupāti vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ

[Yoga-sūtra]

There is merely sound; there is no reality corresponding to it. This is said to be *vikalpa*. Unreality is also spoken of as *tuccha* and *atyanta-asat*.

A rope made of straw appears as a serpent at dusk. This is apparent reality. Both empirical reality and apparent reality are false appearances. Unreality is not appearance. Unreality and false appearance are different from each other. In Vedānta false appearance is called *mithyā*. This term is applied to empirical reality and apparent reality. Apart from these two there is the superior *satya* (Reality). Thus Reality is one; unreality is one; false appearances are two. Reality is the God-head. An example of unreality is the barren woman's son. God-head will not non-exist at any time. It is *satya* (Reality). Some things would not be there before but would come into being afterwards. They may not be now, they may appear later. In regard to every object

there is a time when it is not. That which never is absent is the Real. This is the supreme Self. The unreal is non-existent in all the three divisions of time. In other words, at no time it is. The empirical and apparent realities are a combination of some unreality and some reality. These are illusory. The *vyāvahārika* and the *prātibhāsika* are *mithyā*. What does not appear at all is not false appearance. The illusory must appear. What is the nature of us all? Our body was not there before some time. It will not be there after some time. Therefore it is not real. Since it is there for some time it is not unreal either. If it is real it must remain without destruction in all the three divisions of time. The empirical world is not so. It is like nacre-silver (*śukti-rūpya*). In nacre, silver appears. *Rūpya* means silver. The term Rupee is derived from this word. Is the appearance of silver in nacre real or unreal?

saccenna bādhyeta asaccenna pratīyeta

This (silver) appears to stay at least for a moment. Can the barren woman's son appear at all? No. This (nacre) is not like that (barren woman's son). There is the aspect of is-ness mixed in this. Is-ness cannot be predicated of the horns of a horse. It can only be uttered in mere words. It will not engender any belief. There is no reality at all in regard to the horns of a horse. Since in nacre-silver there is some aspect of is-ness it cannot be taken as unreal. It is not real either because if it were real it must appear always. When the delusion is removed by recognizing it as nacre, then silver will be known as non-existent before as also afterwards. It is non-existent even in the present. It only appeared as if real.

Snake is an appearance. As soon as the cause of it i.e., rope is known, the snake disappears. If that appearance were real it would not disappear later. Therefore this appearance (i.e. snake) is different. It is what is called illusory. *Māyā* is of that nature. It is indeterminable (*anirvacanīya*). It is not real nor unreal. What it is one cannot say. It cannot be described as either real or unreal. It appears for some time. Afterwards it becomes non-existent. *Māyā* is like the rope-snake. Such is the nature of dream also. Māya is that which is not (mā = is not and yā = that which). All of us also are of such nature. There occurs in a Tamil work the following phrase:

"poym māyap perunkadalil"

Here it is stated that *māyā* is that which is false. It is neither real nor unreal; it is of a third category. If we say it is not, then how does it appear? If we say it is real, then how does it get negated? Is *māyā's* existence (or *māyā's* is-ness) Godhead, or is it not?

tattvānyatvābhyām' anirvacanīyam

[Braham-sūtra bhāṣya]

Shall we say that it is of the nature of the supreme Self? If we say that it is different from the supreme Self that would be saying the impossible. It is not also correct to say that it *is* the supreme Self. It is not the nullity (*śūnya*) of the Buddhists. It is not the supremely real either. That is why it is said to be *anirvacanīya*. It is illusory. The illusory is of two kinds. The first kind is that which is not real even while we are looking at it. This is apparent reality. The second kind is what we are. This is empirical reality. In the illustration of the rope-

snake, when the rope is recognized the snake will go. The rope is the substrate; the snake is what is superimposed. With the recognition of the substrate the superimposed will go. When that on which something is superimposed is known, then that which is superimposed will disappear. This is apparent reality. When will 'we' become non-existent? When that on which we have superimposed ourselves is known, then 'we' will disappear. When that on which the universe consisting of the sun and the moon, the five elements, etc. is experienced, then the universe will disappear. That substrate is the absolute Reality.

In the Kamba Rāmāyaṇa this truth is indicated in the following verse:

Alaṅgaliṟ ṟōnṟum poymai
yaravenap pūdam aindum
vilaṅgiya vikārap pāṭṭin
vēṟupā ḍuṟṟa vīkkam
kalaṅguva devaraik kaṇḍāl
avarenbar kaivil ēndi
ilaṅgaiyiṟ porudār anṟē
maṟaigaḷuk kiṟudi yāvār

[Sundara-kāṇḍa]

In a garland of flowers there appears the illusory snake. Similarly the excessive feeling of difference appears on account of the mixture of the five elements. When the garland of flowers is known the snake-appearance goes. Similarly when Śrī Rāma, who fought Rāvaṇa in Śrī Laṅka, who is the substrate of the world is known, the world-appearance will go. It is He that is declared as the absolute Reality in the

Vedāntas. This is the purport of the Kamba-Rāmāyaṇa verse.

Kamba was a great Vaiṣṇava. He has sung an *antādi* in honour of the Vaiṣṇava teacher Śaṭagopa. He has said in the verse cited that this world and we are appearances like the rope-snake. The appearance of the world and the individual is not true. If He in Whom all these are appearances is known, then this delusion will go. The entire world is made of the five elements. It's substrate is Śrī Rāma. If the appearance is removed what remains is only the truth of the supreme Self. This is what Kamba says in the verse. When the supreme Self is 'seen' the empirical reality of the world will disappear. It is what has been superimposed on the Self. The *vyāvahārika* (empirical) and the *prātibhāsika* (apparent) are illusory. They are two grades of reality. That Śrī Śaṅkarācārya classified these categories thus has been stated by those who came after him. In the Brahmavalli of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it has been stated: "The truth became the true (*satyam*) and the untrue (*anṛtam*).

satyam cānṛtam ca satyam abhavat

What is called *anṛtam* here is the *prātibhāsika*.

The empirical and the apparent are real. As distinct from them there is the eternally real. If we consider the empirical and the apparent to be real then there is a superior real. When the relative reals disappear the eternal reality alone will remain. Advaita is that which makes the illusory 'change' into the nature of the real. The superior real is all-pervasive. 'All' is the true nature. The Veda says that it is that truth which is manifest as the world.

Śrī-harṣa has compared the delusion of Damayantī about the identity of Nala to the delusion of the people of the world in regard to the non-duality which is the supreme truth.

The illusory is of two kinds: one is of the form 'it is not' and the other is of the form 'it is'. That which transcends both is Śiva. That is non-duality. There is the ocean of *Māyā*. One cannot say whether it is real or unreal. That is the nature of the world.

When all phenomena disappear that which remains is the supreme Self. As our Ācārya says in the Daśaślokī "That which remains at the end is the one Śiva".

tadekovaśiṣṭhaḥ śivaḥ kevaloham

When all phenomena are burnt to ashes what remains is Śiva. Mahā-bhasmā is one of the names of Parameśvara. When things of different colours are burnt away what remains as residue is only the ash. It's white colour alone will remain. To Parameśvara all are white. Kailāsa is white, ash is white, the Tumbai-flower is white, Gaṅgā is white, bones are white; all are of the colour of white ash. That colour which includes all others, that which at the end remains as one without changing, that is the white colour of ash. All phenomena should be burnt in the fire of knowledge, then there will be no difference. There will emerge the supreme reality which is Advaita. It is as a symbol of that Advaita-nature that Parameśvara has the third eye. It is the fiery eye. He who bears that eye, He is the truth of Advaita.

The Upaniṣad which expounds the meaning of Aum (*praṇava*) is the Māṇḍūkya. It describes Advaita

as Śiva. When we execute deeds, etc. we write on them the word Śiva-mata. Śiva is Advaita. That is the Superior Reality. Because Śrī-harṣa calls Advaita the superior Reality it is clear that he had devotion to Śrī Śaṅkarācārya and Advaita.

In another context Śrī-harṣa has spoken about Candramaulīśvara also. In the Mutt at Kāñcī they have a record of hymns, etc., relating to Śrī Candramaulīśvara.

To Damayantī's *svayaṁvara* just as the kings of many countries went, the king of Kāñcīpuram also went. Whenever Śrī-harṣa speaks about a king he would say that the king had dug a tank. In his opinion digging a tank must have been regarded as a great accomplishment. It would seem that in his native place water was scarce. In Marwar country there may be very rich men. Why should there be such rich people in a country which is fallow? The people of that country go to other countries, amass wealth and return as rich men. It is thus that they come to possess abundant riches. Why should the British people possess such great wealth? In their countries there are only chalk and coal. Therefore they go out to other lands for earning money and become rich. In our part of the country (i.e. India) Marwaris and Nagarattars are observed to be rich people. The Marwaris belong to a place called Maruwad in Rājasthān. Maru-pradeśa means a desert. Marwar is a place where there is desert. There are no agricultural lands. In Nāttukottai where the Nagarattars live, the land is barren without irrigation facilities. The people of these two areas go to other countries for earning money. They who live in a

fertile area become lazy thinking "what do we lack in?" I have said all this in order to show that the life-styles and nature of people change according to the land where they live in. Many of the old Sanskrit stone-inscriptions, we learn, were originally in wells. In places like Gujarat and Marwar, digging a well was like building a temple. There are many inscriptions which are of the nature of *vāpī-paśasti* (in praise of digging wells). It would seem that Śrī-harṣa was born in such a place. Therefore when he speaks about kings he says that they had dug wells.

unmīlallīlanilotpaladala dalanāmodamedasvi-
pūra kroḍakrīḍad-vijālīgaruditamaruts-
phālavācālavīciḥ
etenākhāni śākhānivahanavaharitparṇa-
pūrṇadrumālī-vyālī-dhopāntaśāntavyatha-
pathikadṛśām dattarāgastaḍāgaḥ
[Naiśadha-kāvya, xii, 103]

"This person dug a tank. In that tank there would be plenty of blue lillies. On the petals of the lotuses being swayed by ripples swans would be sporting. On the banks of the tank there would be many varieties of trees. In the shade of those trees pedestrians would come and rest". This is what Śrī-harṣa says in the verse just cited.

There is also a verse about the king of Kañcīpuram. It is in this verse that there is a reference to Śrī Candramaulīśvara.

sindhojatramaya pavitramasṛjattatkīrtipūrtad-
bhutam
yatra snānti jagantisanti kavayaḥ ke vā na
vācamyāḥ

yat bindu śriyam induraňcati jalaṁ cāviśya
dṛśyetaro
yas yāsau jaladevatā sphaṭika bhūrjagarti
yogeśvaraḥ
[Naiśadha-kavya, xii, 38]

That king too dug a tank. That tank exceeded even the ocean in purity and excellence. Just as the king's fame is plenary, in that tank the water is full. It cannot be adequately described by poets. If they begin to describe it then they would be silent. The moon is just a drop thrown up by that tank. This is what is stated in that verse. And then comes the real praise of that king. Goddess Sarasvatī relates to Damayantī in this manner about that king:

In the city of this king there is a Yogeśvara. He is made of crystal. For him the water of this tank is used. When he is bathed with this water he becomes invisible. If crystal is immersed in water it cannot be seen. As Śiva is in the form of a crystal *Liṅga,* when water is poured He becomes invisible. The first manifestation of Parameśvara is in the form of water. Being the deity of water also He remains invisible. When water enters water it will not remain as distinct. Since Parameśvara is in the form of water when *abhiṣeka* (bathing) is performed He becomes invisible.

In this verse the name of Śiva is mentioned as Yogeśvara. This is Yoga-liṅga. Candramaulīśvara is Yoga-liṅga. It is He that is Yogeśvara. Śrī-harṣa refers to Him in this verse. From this it is known that Śrī-harṣa had devotion to Yoga-liṅga which was worshipped by Śrī Ācārya. We have already seen that the poet had devotion to Śrī Ācārya and Advaita.

Crystal *liṅga* is a symbol of the supreme Brahman. In it any colour will get reflected. It stands for the Turīya-śiva (transcendent Reality). When the three *guṇas* get mixed, that Reality takes on their respective forms. To Candramaulīśvara who is the supreme Reality one temple is not enough. He belongs to all places. There should be a temple which is common to all places. That temple should not be stationed permanently in one place. Therefore Śrī Ācārya commanded us to take Candramaulīśvara from place to place and worship Him with due honour.

V

THE STORY OF KUMĀRILA BHAṬṬA

To-day is Skanda-ṣaṣṭi.[8] This is a special day for Lord Subrahmaṇya. To devotees all the days are special days. They do not require any particular meritorious day. It is for worldly people that special days are set apart. These days make them remember the Lord. Svāmī (the Lord) is the term applied to Subrahmaṇya. The other gods have borrowed this title from Him.

devasenapatiḥ śūraḥ svāmī gajamukhānujaḥ
[Amarakośa]

Thus says the Amarakośa. At Tirupati there is a tank called Svāmī-puṣkaraṇī and there is a waterfall Kumāra-dhāra. In the Hindustani language Venkataramaṇa Svāmī is known as Bālāji. Bālā is a name of Subramaṇya. He is called there Śiva-kumāra, Śivabālā. Those who are well-read in Tamil show great devotion to this Svāmī. He is hailed as the Tamil deity. Muruga is the Tamil name given to Him. The Tamils consider Him to be the presiding deity of their language. Those people who follow the dis-

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ciplines of brāhmaṇya-karma refer to Him as the basis of *brāhmaṇya* and hence it is that He is Subrahmaṇya. Thus it is observed that Tamil scholars as well as those who follow the Vedic disciplines hold this deity in high esteem. Subrahmaṇya means good *brāhmaṇya.* Apart from those two categories of people who are devoted to this deity, two others love Him. They are Pārvatī and Parameśvara.

Pārvatī is the World Mother and Parameśvara is the World Father. Kālidāsa says in the Raghuvaṁśa:

jagataḥ pitarau vande pārvatīparameśvarau

Auvayar has said "Mother and Father are the first deities." One must look upon one's mother and father as deities. God Himself appears as mother and father. They are Pārvatī and Parameśvara. If the two together shower grace it is something very special. It is not enough if each show grace separately. One must have the same devotion to both of them. A skilled poet says that Śūrpanakhā and Rāvaṇa came to grief because they showed evil love separately to Rāma and Sītā without being devoted to them uniformly. Śūrpanakhā had love only for Rāma and not for Sītā. Rāvaṇa loved Sītā and hated Rāma. If Parameśvara and Pārvatī are worshipped together with united devotion one would derive great benefit. If there should be the same love for the two they should necessarily be as Mother and Father. The first couple are the World Mother and the World Father. They together should shower grace on the devotee. The devotee should love Them in the same way without making any difference between Them. For Pārvatī there is a name in Tamil *Bāgampiriyāl.* It is for bless-

ing the world together that they appear in the Ardhanarīśvara form. At the place called Tiruccenkoḍu there is the temple of Ardhanarīśvara. If Ardhanarīśvara blesses the devotee it would mean that he has received a blessing of both Pārvatī and Parameśvara. A poet has written a hymn to Śiva in the form of Ardhanarīśvara. In one of the verses he creates misunderstanding between Śiva and Pārvatī.

sādhāraṇe smarajaye niṭilākṣisādhye
bhāgī śivo bhajatu nāma yaśaḥ samagram
vāmāṅghri mātra kalite janani tvadīye
kā vā prasaktiriha kālajaye purāreḥ.

[Ānanda-sāgara-stava]

"They say Parameśvara won a victory over Manmatha. Which is the eye with which this was done? It is the third eye in the forehead. There is an eye in the forehead of Ardhanarīśvara, to whom does it belong? It belongs to both (Parameśvara and Pārvatī). Therefore in the victory that was won over Manmatha both have a share, but it is only Parameśvara that has the credit for this. Even this credit let Him have. There is at least the relation to the eye of Pārvatī's half of the body. But Parameśvara has a name Kāla-saṁhāra-mūrti. It means the form of Śiva which gave a blow to death. With which leg did he kick death? Is it not the left leg? That leg, O Mother, belongs to You. He has no part in it. This being so, in the matter of the conquest of death, what part does Parameśvara the vanquisher of the Puras have?" This is the meaning of the verse cited above. The same poet says in another verse:

aśakyamaṅgāntaravadvibhaktumaṇupramāṇam karaṇam

yadantaḥ sāmānyabhūtam śivayostadekam sānugrahaṁ
syānmayi garbhadāse

[Śiva-līlārṇavam]

The grace of both Pārvatī and Parameśvara will be got from the grace of Ardhanarīśvara. Should one get the blessing from Ardhanarīśvara's feet or from side glances? If it is the blessing from the feet, the question would be which of the two? If it is the side-glances then the doubt would be which of the eyes? Therefore if there is a place in the form of Ardhanarīśvara which is common and if grace is had from that place then one could have had the grace of both of them. Is there such a place? There is. That place is the internal organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*).

In the Nyāya system seven categories are recognized. *Dravya* (substance) is one of them. Of the substances, mind is one. It is atomic in size. The Self also is a substance. That is all-pervading (*vibhu*). The mind is a primal atom. Primal atom is that than which there is nothing smaller.

tacca pratiśarīram bhinnam

[Tarka-saṅgraha]

The mind is different in different bodies. Each mind is of the size of an atom. Atom has no parts. A thing which has parts can be divided. The atom is partless. That which cannot be divided into parts is the atom. If we take a marble it has many parts. If we go on dividing, it will take us to smaller and smaller parts. The marble has an infinite number of parts. In the grinding-stone also there are infinite number of parts. The same is the case with a mus-

tard seed or Mount Meru. In the matter of having parts, Mount Meru and the mustard seed are the same. When we divide Meru and come to stop at a particular place that is the mustard seed. There is difference between the two only in the matter of size. In this manner, if a substance is divided infinitely one would have to come to a stop at a certain place when division would become impossible. When there is that stop, then there is the atom. Mind, as we said, is of the size of an atom. For a body there are two eyes, two ears and almost the rest of the organs are two each. The mind is only one. It cannot be divided and is atomic. This is what the poet says. There is a part which cannot be divided like the other limbs and that part is the internal organ. It cannot be divided because it is atomic in size, it is common to both Parameśvara and Pārvatī. If the grace of that is gained then one would have gained the grace of both Parameśvara and Pārvatī.

Which is the place where the mind of both gets resolved? That is Śiva, of the nature of bliss. The Taittirīya-Upaniṣad says 'He knew bliss as Brahman'. In Tirumūlar's Tirumantiram it is stated that *anbu* is Śiva.

Anbun śivamumira ṇḍenba raṟivilār
anbē śivamāva dāru maṟigilār
anbē śivamāva dāru maṟindapin
anbē śivamā yamarn dirundārē.

Anbu is only Śiva. Auspiciousness is but Śiva. The divine Mother is Sarvamaṅgalā (all-auspicious). Which is the place where the auspicious love of these two join? That place is Subrahmaṇya. He is the one in whom the grace of the two flowers in abundance. If the grace of that Subrahmaṇya is gained we would have gained the grace of Pārvatī and Parameśvara. This day is known also as Subrahmaṇya Ṣaṣṭi. People observe this day as a day of prayer and penance.

Because He is Subrahmaṇya He comes to the world whenever *brāhmaṇya* is on the decline in order to re-establish it. In the Tamil country he took *avatāra* as Saint Jñānasambandha. He removed the *nāstikas,* he gained victory over the Jainas who had destroyed the Vedic way and had advanced atheistic arguments. The *nāstikas* are those who do not have faith in the heavenly world mentioned in the Veda. Speaking about them Jñānasambandha himself says: "They are great sinners who do not know the practices of the Veda." They were not amenable to the Vedic disciplines. They rejected the Veda and the Yajñas. Jñānasambandha has said:

"Vēda vēḷviyai nindanai śeydulal"

Veda is God's command; if one follows it, one would deserve His compassion. The Jainas did not accept this and so Jñānasambandha decided to win a victory over them through arguing. At least through argument, he thought, they would come to their senses. At the end he sang the song which begins with the words: *vālga andaṇar* and established the Vedic way.

Jñānasambandha was an incarnation of Kumāra (Subrahmaṇya). Therefore it was that he drank the milk of the divine Mother — the milk of *jñāna* — and gained the plenary knowledge and the name Jñānasambandha was given to him. Because he was

Subrahmaṇya he sang *vālga andaṇar* and established *brāhmaṇya.*

There is a story about Jñānasambandha that he caused the death of the Jainas by making them mount sharp poles. This seems to attribute a defect to him. Nīlakaṇṭha Dikṣita, a great teacher, wrote a work called Śivalīlārnavam. It relates to the sports of Śiva in Madurai. In the course of this narration the story of Jñānasambandha is given. It says: The Jainas before commencing their debate with Jñānasambandha made a wager saying that if they were defeated they would commit suicide. They were defeated. Although they were atheists they had some good qualities, for example, truth speaking. Therefore they said after their defeat that they would not swerve from truth, and in view of their earlier wager they themselves committed suicide. This is what is stated in Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita's work. Although Jñānasambandha forbade them to commit suicide they did not listen; they mounted the sharp poles and destroyed themselves. Jñānasambandha reconciled himself thinking that this punishment came to the Jainas for their abuse of the Vedic way.

Thus the god who took *avatāra* as Jñānasambandha in the southern country and vanquished the Jainas took another *avatāra* at Prayāga in the northern country at a time when Buddhism was prevalent there. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa was the name of this *avatāra.* In the Śaṅkara-vijaya we read his story. He refuted Buddhist atheism, but he had to give up his life by consigning his body to fire. He did so in order to show the greatness of following the path of *karma.*

In the Madras Sanskrit College a special feature is that Mīmāṁsā-śāstra is taught there.[9] An important text on Mīmāṁsā is known as the Bhāṭṭa-dīpikā. There are three sub-schools of Mīmāṁsā. One of them is the Bhāṭṭa school. Those who belong to this school follow the teaching of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. One of them wrote the work Bhāṭṭa-dīpikā. There are many commentaries on this work. Of the commentators one was Śambhu-Bhaṭṭa. The title Bhaṭṭa has come from the name Kumārila Bhaṭṭa.

In some Śaṅkara-vijayas it is said thus: All the gods went to Parameśvara and complained that in the world the *karma* discipline had declined. Parameśvara in order to resuscitate *dharma* incarnated Himself as Śrī Śaṅkara. And the other gods also appeared in the world as various persons. A similar phenomenon we find at the beginning of the Rāmāyaṇa. Because of complaint from the gods, Mahā-Viṣṇu took the incarnation of Rāma. The gods also incarnated themselves. In the Śaṅkara-vijayas it is stated in a similar manner. Brahmā became Maṇḍana Miśra. Sarasvatī, the wife of Brahmā, became Maṇḍana's consort Sarasavāṇī. Indra was born as King Sudhanvā. Mahā-Viṣṇu came as Padmapāda, one of the chief disciples of Śrī Śaṅkara. Subrahmaṇya incarnated Himself as Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. Since today is Skanda-ṣaṣti I thought of relating the story of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa which occurs in the Śaṅkara-vijaya.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa was born in Prayāga-kṣetra. At that time the Buddhists were powerful. They were extraordinarily intelligent and devoted. They found

9. This discourse was given at the Madras Sanskrit College in Mylapore, Madras.

no use for recitation of the Veda, *upanayana, yāga, yajña* etc. They criticised the Vedas and converted people to the path of atheism.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa came to know of this. He desired to change the situation somehow or other. He wanted to condemn Buddhism. If one has to condemn or criticise a philosophical view, one must first understand it well. Whatever one wants to criticise one must know what he is criticising. Now-a-days, some people want to criticise the Veda, the Dharmaśāstra etc., but it must be known first why these texts came into being. Are they beneficial or are they not; have people in the past gained any good from them; can we now derive any good from them; is such a good necessary at present or is it not? Such questions must be answered after mature consideration. Simply because something does not agree with our present view we should not reject it as wrong. If after due inquiry we are convinced that there is no use to be derived from that thing we may reject it. Instead of doing this, if we reject anything as wrong simply because we do not like it, then it is not correct. We think of rejecting something as useless because we believe something else to be more useful, but if we do it without proper inquiry it will result only in harm. We must inquire about the goodness or otherwise of that issue. If we find that that issue is no good then we can reject that thing. When Kumārila Bhaṭṭa wanted to criticise the Buddhists he thought of the procedure that he should adopt. If today we tell those who raise objection 'let us consider, let us think together in order to find out what

is useful' the answer that we usually get is 'it is nonsense'.

In order to know thoroughly the tenets of Buddhism Kumārila Bhaṭṭa became a student of the Buddhist teachers and studied under them. Those teachers would not accept Brahmins as their students. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa wanted that he should somehow or other pass for a Buddhist student and learn the truths of Buddhism. He wanted to behave like an ordinary man in order that he could condemn the Buddhists. It would be of no use if he won a victory over the Buddhists, himself remaining as Subrahmaṇya. He should accomplish this purpose through human endeavour. If something is to be accomplished through divine power, nothing else would be required. If a god-incarnate wants to burn all people, he could do that. Then there would be no world-creation at all.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa put on the guise of a Buddhist. He entered a big *vihāra* for pursuing Buddhist studies. That *vihāra* was a seven-storeyed building. While he was in that institution he performed his Vedic rituals without the knowledge of others. He had his lessons from the Buddhist teachers. During the teaching the Buddhists would abuse the Veda and criticise Vedic rituals. At such times Kumārila Bhaṭṭa would be experiencing great sorrow. But he tried his best not to show it off. Yet sometimes his eyes would shed tears. The teachers would notice this. They thought: "This student must be a Brahmin." They asked him: "Why are you weeping?" He somehow rose to the situation and explained: "Oh! what acute intellect, how deep is your criticism of the Veda, this is extremely good, therefore I am over-

joyed and tears come to my eyes." This happened several times. At last the Buddhists found out the truth. They thought that he should not be kept there any longer. If he had learnt only superficial aspects of Buddhism they would simply drive him away. But he had come to know thoroughly the Buddhist tenets. Therefore the Buddhist teachers wanted to see that he did not live in the world. They took him to the seventh storey of the building and they caused him to fall from there. He fell. While falling he uttered a *śloka* saying: "If Veda is *pramāṇa* (authority) I should not suffer from this fall." When he fell he did not suffer any great harm. Only one of his eyes was hurt by a stone. At once he got angry.

patan patan saudhatalānyaroruham yadi
pramāṇam śrutayo bhavanti
jīveyamasmin patito' samasthale majjivane
tacchrutimānatagatiḥ
yadīti saṁdehapada prayogadvyājena
śāstraśravanācca hetoḥ
mamoccadeśat patato vyanaṅkṣīt
tadekacakṣurvidhikalpanā sā
[Mādhava-Śaṅkara-vijaya, viii, 98-99]

Those who come as *avatāras* do get angry some times and also experience fear, or sorrow. They occurred to Rāma. These are all modes of the mind. Even as one's limbs oscillate, the mental modes also oscillate. They know this nature and so they will not succumb to them. Our case is different. When we are subject to them we become prey to sorrow. Therefore we must control the mind without giving room to those modes. In this respect the *jñānīs* are greater than *avatāras*. The *avatāras* do many things

like others and subject themselves to happiness and sorrow. But the *jñānī* controls his mind and, having realized the supreme Oneness, remains silent.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa got furious. He thought: "What great faith I had in the Veda; and this has happened to me." At that time there was a voice heard and it said: "This is the result of your hypothetical statement 'if the Veda is *pramāṇa* (authority)!' The 'if' indicates some doubt."

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa commenced his mission of spreading the Mīmāṁsā view. According to this school, *karma* (ritual) is the main path. Buddhism said there is no *karma*, there is no God. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa condemned this view. He said: "Let us not be concerned about God. *Karma* will itself yield its fruit. If we perform *karmas* properly we shall enjoy the fruits thereof. All accomplishments are only through *karma*." This is his view. Śrī Ācārya did not criticise Buddhism in any extensive manner. Even before him the Mīmāṁsakas had silenced the Buddhists, therefore there was no need for Śrī Ācārya to enter into any great debate with the Buddhists. He has criticised the Buddhist doctrines only in the Bhāṣya.

The school which he attacked extensively is that of the Mīmāṁsakas. 'There is no God, there is only *karma*.' So say the Mīmāṁsakas. The Buddhists claim that there is no need for either. Before the *avatāra* of Śrī Ācārya what was prevalent every where was karma. Buddhism had subsided and Mīmāṁsā was on the ascendant.

After receiving initiation from Govinda Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya went to Kāśī and wrote his Sūtra-bhāṣya there. When he started on his tour of victory he proceeded first towards the East. He heard that Kumārila Bhaṭṭa had resolved to leave his body entering a burning heap of paddy-husk. This is known as entry into *tuṣāgni*. This fire will burn the body slowly. It is a very hard form of death. The followers of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa claimed that *karma* alone would do for salvation. Śrī Ācārya wanted to establish the Vedāntic view. "*Karma* alone cannot bring in the highest goal. All our deeds are subject to be measured, their fruit also is finite. In order to gain the immeasurable and time-transcending happiness, *karmas* alone will not do. They cannot be the means for attaining the eternal good. The eternal good can come only through the grace of God. One should not stop with following the *karma-kāṇḍa*. Its fruit is to be found in the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*. This is Vedānta." Śrī Ācārya wanted to meet Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and have an argument with him. If Kumārila would be convinced, the world would listen to him. Therefore as soon as he heard that Kumārila Bhaṭṭa had entered the heap of burning paddy-husk he hastened to him. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa was being slowly burnt. Śrī Ācārya asked him why he had resolved on this extreme measure. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa replied: "I spoke lies to the Buddhist teachers and pretended to be their student and learnt from them their doctrines. If one learns even a single letter from a person, that person should be regarded as one's *guru*. Therefore I have been a traitor to the Buddhist *gurus*. Can I behave like this, especially since my mission is to establish

the path of *karma*? I thought about expiation for the sin that I have committed. I consulted the *dharma-śāstras*. I came to know that the only expiation is the most painful death. That is why I am leaving my body entering a smouldering heap of paddy-husk." If we find a text prescribing such a course we would consign it to fire but Kumārila was happy that he found the proper expiatory action. Our Ācārya listened to what Kumārila Bhaṭṭa said. He spoke to him about the path of *jñāna*. He showed with proper reasoning why the path of ritual by itself would be of no use. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa realized the truth of all this and said: "I have had the blessing of seeing you. I have achieved my end. If the world comes to know of what you have told me it will reap the highest good. I am not in a position to do that service now. Please bless me. There is a Mīmāṁsaka who is more learned than I. He lives in the city of Māhiṣmatī. His name is Maṇḍana Miśra. He is fanatically devoted to the path of ritual. If he is converted then the world will get converted. Please go to him and through a debate with him make him get convinced of the excellence of Vedānta." Thus saying Kumārila Bhaṭṭa left his body. Śrī Ācārya told the followers of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa that actions should be done as an offering to God. From that time onwards whenever we perform an action or ritual we take a resolution saying: *Parameśvara prītyartham* (to please Parameśvara). This resolution was first given to us by Śrī Ācārya. It was not there before him. The practice of making this resolution even while performing *yāga* or *yajña* came into vogue after Śrī Ācārya.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa gave up his body for the sake

of *brāhmaṇya.* He did so because he wanted to follow the way laid down in the *dharma-śāstras.* We are fortunate to have the foundation for our religion laid down by such a great man as he. Therefore there is no fear. Our faith that *brāhmaṇya* will ever remain in the world will not get diminished. It is by the great sacrifices of great men that our *dharma-śāstras* live.

Just as Kumārila Bhaṭṭa entered the fire at the end, even so Jñānasambandha did. Parameśvara Himself appeared in the form of fire. It is stated in the Amarakośa: *Senānīragnibhūrguhah.*

Subrahmaṇya came from fire and therefore it is easy for Him to enter into it. Because He came from fire He is called Agni-bhūḥ. Because the Śaravaṇa tank served as His mother He is called Śaravaṇa-bhava, Śaravaṇa-perumāl. For Him six *kārtika* girls (stars) were mothers. So He came to have the name Kārtikeya. Gaṅgā was one mother, hence He is Gāṅgeya. All were in the position of mothers. All of them brought up Skanda in order to remove the difficulties that the gods were facing.

Kṛttikā consists of six stars. The names of these are mentioned in the Veda. Of the groups of stars, that which is a cluster of six is Kṛttikā. Among the *tithis* (days) the sixth is *ṣaṣti.* This month, according to Cāndramāna-reckoning, is Kārttikā. Today's *tithi* is *ṣaṣti* (3.11.1932). Both together constitute the day that is specially related to the six-faced god (Ṣaṇmukha).

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and Jñānasambandha were both of them *avatāras* of Śrī Subrahmaṇya. Both of them

established the path of Vedic *karmas.* One of them did this in the north and the other in the south. Kumārila propagated the Veda. Jñānasambandha sang the Tamil-Veda. Both of them were learned in the entire Veda. Jñānasambandha refers to himself as 'Nān-maṟai-Jñānsambandhan'. Because he drank the milk given by the Divine Mother he came to know the entire Veda. For him to establish the Vedic *dharma* in the whole of the Tamil country twelve years were enough. He did all this remaining in the first *āśrama* (*brahmacarya*). Our Ācārya lived for thirty-two years. He had to take another *āśrama* (*sannyāsa*). In order to undertake a tour of victory from Setu to the Himālayas he had to live little longer. The Son (Subrahmaṇya as a Jñānasambandha) spread the Veda in that manner. The Father i.e. (Śiva as Śaṅkara) fulfilled the same mission in this manner. Our Ācārya says in a verse of the Saundarya-laharī:

tava stanyam manye dharanīdharakanye hṛdayataḥ
payaḥ pārāvāraḥ parivahati sārasvatamiva
dayāvatyā dattam drāviḍaśiśurāsvādya tava yat
kavīnām prauḍhānām ajani kamanīyaḥ kavayitā

(Saundarya-laharī, verse 75)

"Because of Thy Grace wealth grows like a flood. It is *sārasvata*-ambrosia i.e., which is ambrosia of speech. Thou gavest it to the Tamil child out of great compassion." Here the reference is to Jñānasambandha. Lord Muruga Himself was one of the poets of the Tamil Saṅgam in Madurai.

In the course of his tour Śrī Ācārya gave his *darśana* to Kumārila and as requested by Kumārila he went to the place where Maṇḍana Miśra was, debated with him in order to show the deficiency of *karma-mārga* and taught him the path of Vedānta.

The story of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and that of Jñāna-sambandha are related to the Ācārya. The story of the former falls within the life-story of Śrī Ācārya. The story of the latter comes in a verse composed by the Ācārya. The two refuted two different types of atheism. Both of them were *avatāras* of Śrī Subrahmaṇya.

In the Veda there occurs the following: Parameśvara the Father paid obeisance to His Son.

In the Ṛg-Veda at five places there is *pañca-rudra*. In one of them this *mantra* occurs. There is a hymn known as Veda-pādastava. In this hymn in every verse one quarter consists of words from the Veda. I shall cite one of them here.

umākomalahastābhyām sambhāvitalalātikam
hiraṇyakuṇḍalam vande kumāram
puṣkarasrajam

The fourth quarter of this verse is a citation from the Veda. It is stated in this verse that Kumāra Svāmī is the one whose forehead was decorated by the Divine Mother with her beautiful hands.

Since today is Skanda-ṣaṣti I have spoken about Lord Subrahmaṇya and His *avatāra* Kumārila Bhaṭṭa as it occurs in the Śrī Śaṅkara-vijaya.

Among the Śaṅkara-vijayas there are five which

are important. They are: (1) Mādhavīya, (2) Cidvilāsīya, (3) Ānandagirīya, (4) Vyāsācalīya and (5) Keralīya. We come to know that there were some Śaṅkara-vijayas even older than these. Except the Vyāsācalīya the other Śaṅkara-vijayas have been printed. The Mādhavīya was published many years ago in the "Ānanda-āśrama" series. The Keraḷīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya has been published in Malayālam. The author of the Mādhavīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya says that he is summarizing what is to be found in an old Śaṅkara-vijaya. From this it is clear that there was an old Śaṅkara-vijaya before the Mādhavīya. There is a commentary on the Mādhavīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya called Diṇḍima. In the Mādhavīya it is stated simply that Śrī Ācārya went to Kailāsa and in this context the commentator cites a few verses from the Śiva-rahasya and says that all these stories are elaborately dealt with in the Bṛhat-Śaṅkara-vijaya. The Mādhavīya is described as Saṁkṣepa (concise) Śaṅkara-vijaya.

In the Keraḷīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya there is reference to the Vyāsācalīya. It is stated there that the Vyāsācalīya is an old work.

atyunnatasya kāvyadrorvyāsācalabhuvo' khilam
arthaprasūnāmādātumasamartho'ham adbhutam

"In the soil called Vyāsācala the tree known as the Śaṅkara-vijaya poem grew. Because it grew out of *acala* (the unmoving mountain) it is a great tree. Can I, an ordinary man, understand the value of the flower which is its meaning?" Thus wrote the author of the Keraḷīya Śaṅkara-vijaya. He says in effect "Who am I to understand the Vyāsācala?" For the Mādhavīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya, the author himself has

written a commentary. He refers to himself as Vyāsācala. That is wrong. It is definitely stated that the Vyāsācalīya is an old Śaṅkara-vijaya.

Apart from Śaṅkara-vijayas there is a work known as Śaṅkarābhyudaya. The author who wrote it was one Rājacūḍāmaṇi Dīkṣita. There are eight *sargas* (chapters) in this work.

VI

AUTHORITIES FOR ĪŚVARA-AVATĀRA

We perform *sahasra-nāma-arcana* (offering flowers with one thousand names) to the Divine Mother. That *Lalitā sahasra-nāma arcana* we perform specially on Fridays. Of all *sahasra-nāmas* the one for the Divine Mother has special greatness. Even while reciting it we feel happiness in the mind. Even though it is only a series of names it is blissful. In it a name does not occur more than once. Those who know Sanskrit understand its greatness.

To the Lalitā Sahasra-nāma one Bhāskararāya has written a commentary. He had great devotion to the Divine Mother. His *guru* gave him the name Bhāsurānandanātha. The commentary is called Saubhāgyabhāskaram. Bhāskararāya wrote his commentary with full knowledge of the path of worshipping the Divine Mother. Much of what we know now of *mantra-śāstra* is from what he has written.

He belonged to Mahārāṣṭra country. He came to South India. The king of Tanjavur knew his greatness. He made him stay in a village on the banks of the Kāverī. The village is known as Bhāskararāja-

puram after him. Bhāskararājapuram is on the northern bank of the Kāverī. On its southern bank there is a place called Tiruvālaṅkaḍu. Near Mōsūr there is another Tiruvālaṅkaḍu. At this place Parameśvara performed His dance lifting His leg high. Some Brahmins went from this place to the Tiruvālaṅkaḍu on the Kāverī and established a temple, an idol etc., as in the place from which they had come. In these two villages there were several intelligent scholars. Of these scholars many were related to each other. Bhāskararājapuram was a village in which there were many learned people.

Bhāskararāya was a great authority on *mantra-śāstra.* He had a good and great nature. At the commencement of the *Bhāṣya* (commentary) he explains for what purpose he undertakes this work. He says: "I make this endeavour in order that all people may be happy." He sets four limits and says that all people living within those limits should derive great benefit. In our country there are rivers such as Gaṅgā, Sindhu and Brahmaputra. In our *śāstras* we do not come across the name Brahmaputra. Bhāskararāya has stated:

āprācaḥ kāmarūpāddruhiṇasutanadaplāvi-
tādāpratīco
gāndhārāt sindhusārdrādraghuvaracaritādā, ca
setoravācaḥ
ākedārād udīcastuhinagahanataḥ
puṇyadeśānaśeṣam-
stīrthānya gryāṇi pīthānyapi ca diviṣadām
saiṣa sākṣādākārṣīt.

(Lalitā Sahasra-nāma Bhāṣya)

Kāma-rūpa is Assam. In that area there is the famous temple of Kāmākṣī. While referring to this country Bhāskararāya has said: "Kāma-rūpa where the Brahmaputra flows." He further says "In the country which is in the middle with Kāma-rūpa in the east, with Sindu in the west, with Setu in the south which was made holy by the feet of Sītā, the daughter of Janaka, and with the Himālayas in the north which were rendered pure by the *avatāra* of Pārvatī Devī, there are many assemblies of scholars. To all of them let my effort give happiness." Assemblies (*samājas*) become contented. The poet says: "It is not possible to make *samaja* contented." *Samaja* means a flock of sheep. It refers to those who have no discrimination.

The poet Bhāskararāya has praised Śrī Ācārya. The verses he has composed are printed along with his commentary on the Lalitā Sahasra-nāma. Among those verses there are hymns to Śrī Śaṅkara.

I stated earlier that the story of Śrī Ācārya is to be found also in works other than the Śaṅkara-vijayas such as the Patañjali-vijaya to which I have already referred. I have also stated that there are references in the epics and the Purāṇas. I stated that the story of Śrī Bhagavatpāda is to be seen in the Śiva-rahasya which is an epic and in the Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa. The great poet Bhāskararāya who has explained the purport of Śrī Vidyā and the secret of *mantra-śāstra* has noted in the hymn that he has composed to Śrī Śaṅkara, the various places in which there are particulars mentioned about Śrī Ācārya. From this we know that there is another work regarding Śrī Ācārya.

The Viṣṇu-dharmottara is a text; it is a *pariśiṣṭa* of the Viṣṇu-purāṇa. It deals with the instruction given by a *yakṣa* called Puṣkara to Śrī Rāma. *Yakṣas* are a class of gods. Their chief is Kubera. The *yakṣa* Puṣkara taught Śrī Rāma the meaning of the Ṛg-verses which are found in the three Vedas. Thus what he instructed was *karma-kāṇḍa.* Sage Vasiṣtha taught Rāma *jñāna* (knowledge). Viṣṇu-dharmottara may be considered to be a commentary on the Veda. In the Ṛg-veda there is a Ṛk-verse.

śrīrāmam pratipuṣkarābhidhamahāyakṣeṇa
vedatraya-vyakhyānāvasare viśiṣya kathitam
śrīviṣṇudharmottare
etām yadhenumupahvayāmi sudughāmityṛg-gatam
śaṅkarācāryām
śiṣyacatuṣṭayena sahitam vande gurūṇāṁ gurum.

The Viṣṇu-dharmottara makes the statement that when on the earth the *Advaita-tattva* will be forgotten, Parameśvara will come as avatāra in order to bless through giving instruction in Advaita even as a cow protects its calf by giving it milk. This is what Bhāskararāya has stated. In the Veda there is reference to Śrī Ācārya. It is enough if Bhāskararāya says this or if Purāṇa refers to the Great Master. But what is more is that Bhāskararāya says that it is stated in the Purāṇa that the Veda mentions Śrī Ācārya.

varṣeṣvatīteṣu śakesu ṣatsu tiṣye'vatīrnaṁ bhuvi
śaṅkarāryam
śiṣyaiścaturbhih sahitaṁ śivādipāraṁ-
parīkāvadhimānamāmah.

Bhāskararāya's statement has enhanced the value of the reference. While the *yakṣa* gives instruction

to Śrī Rāma about the Ṛk-verse in the Veda he says that Paramaśiva would be coming to the earth with four disciples as Śaṅkarācārya and that he would be the teacher of all teachers.

In another book it has been stated that in the Veda, in a different context there is reference about the Ācārya.

Śrī Rudra is a section of the Veda. It is an important section. It must be recited daily by everyone. Reciting it eleven times is of special value. This is called *ekādaśa rudra pārāyaṇam.* It is usual to recite Śrī Rudra while performing *abhiṣeka* and thereafter to do the *pūjā* to the deity. Specially valuable is the *ekādaśa rudra-abhiṣeka.* Reciting it one hundred and twenty one times is called Rudraikādaśīya. In Kerala on the day of the birth-star of a person Śrī Rudra is recited one hundred and twenty-one times and they will have ceremonial bath with water sanctified thereby. Reciting Rudraikādaśīya eleven times is known as Mahārudra. Reciting eleven times in that manner is Ati-rudra. Reciting Rudra is prescribed for *sannyāsins* also.

svaśakhopaniṣadgītā viṣṇornāmasahasrakam
śrīrudram pauruṣaṁ sūktaṁ nityamāvartayedyatiḥ

An ascetic should recite the Upaniṣads belonging to the branch of the Veda which was his in his earlier *āśrama* and then he should recite the *Bhagavad-gītā.*

gaṅgājalalavakaṇikā pītā bhagavad-gītā
kiṁcidadhītā
[Carpaṭa-Pañjarikā stotram]

The *Bhagavad-gītā* should be recited. The re-

cital of at least a little of it is enough; then should be chanted *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*; then Śrī Rudra should be chanted and also Puruṣa-sūkta. Thus an ascetic should go through daily a programme of recitation. *Rudra-japa* will remove the effect of the five great sins.

Of the fourteen *vidyās* the Veda is primary and the rest are its limbs. Of the Vedas three are important. Of these three, the Yajur-veda is in the middle and it consists of seven *kāṇḍas* (sections). The fourth *kāṇḍa* is the middle section.

In the middle of it is Śrī Rudra. There is the *pañcākṣara-mantra* in the middle of that. The two letters Śiva are in its middle. Even as in the sanctum sanctorum of the Śiva temple there is the great *Liṅga*, so what is in the middle of all the *vidyās* is the two-lettered Śiva.

vidyāsu śrutirūtkṛṣṭā rudraikādaśinī śrutau
tatra pañcākṣarī tasyāṁ śiva ityakṣaradvayam

The two letters are like the life of all and they are in the middle of Śrī Rudra. In the Śrī Rudra there is reference to Śrī Ācārya also. One scholar has written a commentary on the Śrī Rudra alone. The Śrī Rudra contains many names of Paramaśiva. He is said to be a smith, a thief, a gypsy, etc. It is stated that he is a great thief among thieves.

niṣaṅgiṇa iṣudhimate taskarāṇām pataye
namo namaḥ
[Śrī Rudra]

There is nothing that is not He. This is the meaning of the series of names. "Thou art Kapardin; and Thou art Vyuptakeśa".

namaḥ kapardine ca vyuptakeśāya ca

These names occur in a place in the Śrī Rudra. Kapardin means He who has matted locks. *Kaparda* is the name of the matted locks of Paramaśiva alone. Vyuptakeśa means He who is with the shaven head. *Vyuptam* means *vapanam* (shaven). We have seen everywhere the figure of Śiva with matted locks. But where have we seen Him with the shaven head? The figures of Śiva such as Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Naṭarāja have matted locks. We do not know of any form of Śiva which is without the matted locks. But in the Śrī Rudra the name of Śiva occurs which means the one with the 'shaven head'. The commentator of the Śrī Rudra thought about this and was searching for a form which will answer to this name. The name Kapardin denotes Paramaśiva undoubtedly. It is also a special name. The name that comes after it must also be a special name. But it seems to be the contrary.

The Veda must be interpreted with the help of the Epics and the Purāṇas.

itihāsapurāṇābhyām vedaṁ samupabṛṁhayet
bibhetyalpaśrutād-vedo māmayaṁ pratariṣyati

In relation to the Veda the Purāṇa is like a magnifying glass. Without knowing the Epics and the Purāṇas if a person begins to interpret the Veda, the Veda is 'afraid' of him. Why? He will drag it on to places without any warrant. He will not behave as the Veda teaches. He will be happy if the Veda is favourable to his way of interpretation. Even if that interpretation were to be true he will be satisfied only because it coin-

cides with his interpretation. He will even compliment the Veda for it.

If one does not know the meaning of the Veda one should search for it in the Epics and the Purāṇas. The commentator on the Śrī Rudra did this. He came across the following statement in the Vāyu-purāṇa:

caturbhiḥ saha śiṣyaistu śaṅkaro'vartariṣyati

The statement is that Īśvara will come as the *Guru* along with four *śiṣyas*. The commentator read the Śiva-rahasya also and at once he understood the meaning. In the *bhāṣya* he cites these authorities and says that the name Vyuptakeśa refers only to Śaṅkara's *avatāra*. There is no other name possible. Śrī Rudra says first the name 'Kapardin' which is special to Śiva and then says 'Vyuptakeśa' and so the commentator observes that this also should be regarded as a special name.

There is a Purāṇa called Saura-purāṇa. It says that the Sun-god is the supreme Self. In it there occurs the following verse:

vyākurvan vyāsasūtrārthaṁ śruterartham yathocivān
śruternyāyyaḥ sa evārthaḥ śaṅkaraḥ savitā na nī

In this verse it is stated that Śrī Ācārya is not a mere human being. He is verily the Sun-god who took an *avatāra*. It is known from this context also that Śrī Ācārya is the supreme Self. In the Śiva-rahasya there is the following verse:

kariṣyatyavatārāniśaṅkaro nīlalohitaḥ
śrautasmārtapratiṣṭhārtaṁ bhūtānāṁ hitakāmyayā

The thought occurs to me which is not mentioned in the commentary on Śrī Rudra. In Śrī Rudra, Śrī Ācārya's name occurs before the mention of the *pañcākṣara*. First the form of Śaṅkara and then the form of Śiva are mentioned. The sequence implies that the *pañcākṣara* should be learnt from the *guru* Ācārya. There is the name Śambhu first, then Śaṅkara and thereafter the *pañcākṣara*. It is from the *guru* that the nature of Śiva is to be understood. The *sūta-saṁhitā* says:

śive ruṣṭe gurustrātā gurau ruṣṭe na kaścana

If one commits an offence to Śiva the guru will pardon him for that offence. But the offence committed against the *guru* cannot be pardoned by anyone. Therefore all actions should be commenced after uttering the words:

Śrī gurubhyo namaḥ

In the Śrī Rudra therefore there are the words *namaḥ śaṅkarāya ca* and then comes the *pañcākṣara*. There is another reason for this.

There is the following verse in the Mādhavīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya:

ajñanantargahanapatitān ātmavidhyopadeśai-
strātum lokān bhavadavaśikhātāpapāpacyamānān
muktvā maunaṁ vaṭaviṭapinormūlato niṣpatantī
śambhormūrtiścarati bhuvane śaṅkarācāryarūpā

Those who saw Śrī Ācārya were fascinated and joy welled forth from their hearts. Who was he? He was a form of Paramaśiva. That form walks about

in the world. This form remained in the past as Dakṣiṇāmūrti seated without moving at the foot of the banyan tree. Dakṣiṇāmūrti's eyes were closed. His mouth did not speak. This form of the Lord would not be of use in the *Kaliyuga,* so the Lord thought.

There was a chaste woman. Her voice would not be audible. Once the neighbour's child fell into the well and then she had to cry out. There was no other go. Similarly in this age of Kali silence will not do. So thought the Lord. In other ages there were hindrances to the world created by the *asuras* (demons). In order to destroy them Viṣṇu came with His destructive weapons. He destroyed all of them. In Kali there are no *asuras* as a separate class. They have entered into our intellects. In the Rāmāyaṇa we read that Subāhu and Mārīca came to Viśvāmitra's *yāga.* Suppose these demons entered into the brain of Viśvāmitra then he would not do the *yāga.* In the same way we find the situation in the world. Because the *asura* has entered into our brain we do all that the *asura* does. The destruction of this *asura* cannot be left to Viṣṇu. Dakṣiṇāmūrti realized that he cannot continue to be seated in silence. He wanted to walk hereafter and left His silence. He rose from the foot of the banyan tree. To the extent He was silent before, He now began to talk. He wrote the commentaries. Thus says the Mādhavīya-Śaṅkara-vijaya. Śaṅkarācārya is the walking form of Śambhu. *Śaṁ* means happiness and *Bhu* means the place of origin. If there is a spring those who want water must go to it as the source. Śambhu is the source of unexcellable happiness. If the Lord remains as Śambhu it would not be for this *yuga.* He must take that happiness

and give it to all people. He must render that service to everyone. There are people who would not receive, even if it is given to them. Therefore the form of Śiva as the seated Śambhu would not be of avail. Śaṅkara is the form which moves about. That is the form which is required now. So it is, that in the Śrī Rudra, there is obeisance to the following names of Śiva in sequence: "Obeisance to Śambhu, obeisance to Mayobhu, obeisance to Śaṅkara, obeisance to Mayaskara."

It is Śambhu that is Dakṣiṇāmūrti, then comes Śrī Śaṅkara the Ācārya and then comes the *Pañcākṣara.* This order fits quite aptly.

Thus we have seen that Śaṅkara's *avatāra* is mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda-mantra, the Viṣṇu-dharmottara, in the commentary of Bhāskararāya and at two places in Śrī Rudra.

VII

THE ADVENT OF ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya was born on the fifth day in the bright fortnight of the month of Vaiśākha. The star on that day was *ārdrā* or *punarvasu*. I think that the day of the Ācārya's *avatāra* is a great auspicious day. Many are the auspicious occasions: Śivarātri, Gokulāṣṭami, Śrī Rāmanavami, Nṛsimha-jayanti, Uttarāyana-puṇya-kāla, Dakṣīṇāyaṇa-puṇya-kāla, etc. Many such auspicious occasions are mentioned in the Purāṇas. Greater and more holy than all of them is the *jayanti* of Śrī Ācārya. It may occur to you that my reasons for saying so are two. One of them is that it is the *jayanti* of our *Ācārya*. Second is that as I have started relating his story it may seem that I praise the *jayanti* as the most auspicious. You may think that these are the two reasons. Apart from these two there is another important reason for saying that this is the most auspicious holy occasion. We have to observe this occasion with greater faith and sincerity. Is it right to say that the *jayanti* of Śrī Śaṅkara is superior to all other auspicious occasions? Is there any reason for this? If you think thus I shall give the reason that occurs to my mind.

More than two thousand years have passed since the Kaliyuga began on earth. Faith in the basic texts, the Vedas, the Dharma-śāstras, the Purāṇas, etc., has declined. The traditional practices including devotion, etc., had changed. People came to have faith in the teachings of the Buddha, and certain new religions emerged. Observing auspicious occasions fell into disuse. It was at that time that the advent of Śrī Śaṅkara took place and it was responsible for reviving the observance of the traditional auspicious days. It is because of Śaṅkara's *avatāra,* Śivarātri, Gokulaṣṭami, Śrī Rāmanavami, etc., have become again auspicious occasions. Therefore the *jayanti* of Śrī Śaṅkara should be celebrated with great faith.

When did this auspicious occasion occur, in which part of the country, at which place and in the house of which parents? In Kerala at a place called Kālaḍi in the house of Śivaguru and Āryāmbā the birth of Śrī Śaṅkara occurred. This is well known.

In Kerala there is a holy place called Vṛṣācala. It is a Mahā-śivakṣetra. *Vṛṣa* means Nandikeśvara. The mount on which the temple is situated is flat and even as if artificially created with the help of a spade. It is a beautiful mount. In that temple Śivarātri is observed with special fervour. In that temple there is an image of Ṛṣabha (sacred bull). It's colour is pure white. It is customary for people to perform *bhajana* there. *Bhaja Sevāyām.*

Bhajana means divine service. Staying at a temple for a month or two in the presence of the deity, taking bath every day in the holy tank, etc.,

sleeping also there, waiting for the deity's boon, these are called observing *bhajana*. Even today at the Vṛṣācala temple this form of service is being done. The name of that place is Śiva-pērūr. If we prefix Tiru to it the name would be Tiru-civappērūr. It is customary to add the prefix Tiru to all sacred places. It is thus that Allikkēni becomes Tiruvallikkēni. Orriyur becomes Tiruvoṟṟiyur. Similarly Vṛṣācala is called Tirucivappērūr. It is the same as what people now call Tirucūr. In that sacred place Śivaguru and Āryāmbā observed *bhajana*. Their prayer was that they should be blessed with the birth of a good son. Śivaguru's father, it is known, was one Vidyādhirāja. At the Vṛṣācala temple they do *abhiṣeka* to Parameśvara always with cow's ghee. Because of this constant *abhiṣeka* the ghee will be seen to form a mount as it were. The *Mahā-liṅga* cannot be seen because it is covered with ghee. In Kerala the study of Āyurvedic texts and the practice of Āyurveda are prevalent. In the Āyurveda it is stated that old ghee would be a cure for many diseases. In the Tirucūr temple there is ghee which is as old as a thousand years. The *vaidyas* in Kerala go to this temple and get the ghee from there if they want to secure old ghee. Practitioners of Āyurveda in other places also do the same. The Brahmins of Kerala are the Nambūdiris. Each Nambūdiri would have undergone a study of the Veda. As *brahmacārins* the Nambūdiris wear the traditional deer-skin and bear the staff during the period of the study of the Veda. And only thereafter such of those who desire to have English education go for it. Up to this day this tradition is being followed. Only now there are slight changes.

In the Kali-yuga, Īśvara wanted to come as *avatāra*. He chose a place where the study of the Veda and the performance of Vedic *karma* are to be found in a satisfactory way. That was Kerala. In our part of the country (i.e. Tamil Nadu) only one in a thousand may be a Vedic scholar, but in Kerala all the Brahmins would have had training in Vedic recitations. Here on the contrary, the number of those who have forgotten this duty is great. If even today in Kerala all study the Vedas then the situation should have been even better, in fact ideal, two or three thousand years ago. That was why Śrī Śaṅkarācārya chose Kerala for his advent.

In the Śaṅkara-vijaya it is said that the gods went to Parameśvara and complained to Him that in the world the path of *karma* had declined and prayed that He should reestablish it. It is also stated that as is the case with other *avatāras* Īśvara told the gods that they should be born in the world in different capacities. We know that in the case of the other *avatāras* the gods waited to be relieved of the oppression from the *asuras*. But in the case of Śaṅkara *avatāra* we are told that the gods wanted the Lord to reestablish the path of *karma*.

Who are the gods? If the path of *karma* declines how do they suffer?

The Purāṇas say that there are thirty-three crores of gods. In the other religions, only one god is accepted. The followers of those religions accuse us of believing in many gods. A general study of Hinduism does not make it clear as to who the gods are. To those who are not learned it does not matter. They are interested only in worshipping them. Those

who are scholars do not have even this devotion. We read mostly books which say that the Purāṇas about the gods are false. Wherever we look at the books which are related to our religion we read about the gods. For instance in the Rāmāyaṇa we read: "Indra came, Varuṇa came, Daśaratha went to the world of the gods", etc. All this to us is incomprehensible. Why? Because we do not understand. We say that all this is false. When we say "No, it cannot be" our task cannot end there. We must know what the Purāṇas say about them. Thereafter we must come to a conclusion. The air is not perceptible. At first we think that there is nothing such as air but then we feel it on our body and we decide there is such an element as air. Similarly if we do not understand at first we should not adopt a negative attitude. We should go to the *śāstras* and see what they say.

The *śāstras* declare that Parameśvara who is one makes Himself into three. At three times He puts on three different guises. A person dresses himself in a particular way when he goes to the court. The same person changes his attire when he performs *pūjā*. Thus there is a different form of dress for each vocation. Parameśvara too puts on different guises for performing the functions of creation, preservation and destruction. There are two other functions, namely veiling and bestowing grace. These together are the five cosmic functions and correspondingly God puts on five forms. The tahsildar goes to his office dressed in an orthodox manner with tucked up undercloth, sacred ash on the forehead, bilva-leaf on his ears, etc. An ignoramus who goes to his office asks

him when the tahsildar would come. He does not know that the two are one, that he is talking to the tahsildar. Similar are the cases of one who says that Viṣṇu is great and is different from Śiva and the one who claims Śiva to be great and the two quarrel with each other. They start with the conclusion that the two are different and that between them there is distinction of 'higher and lower'. This is wrong. The forms differ according to occasion. Do we not put on different guises for performing different functions? At different times we appear in different forms. God has power which is more than what we possess. In fact, He is omnipotent, therefore at the same time He performs different functions putting on different forms.

The supreme God is only one. He creates many worlds and protects them. Now researchers in science tell us that every star is a sun and that there are planets for each of them as there are for our sun. Our Purāṇas have told us a long time ago that there are many solar systems. In all these many worlds there are living beings which require food and shelter. We say that they are all made of five elements. Our body itself is constituted by these elements. So is the case with what we grow in the lands. These five elements mix in different ways and give rise to different things. There arise six tastes and by intermixture they give rise to several types of tasty food. Similarly the five primary elements become through intermixture the various kinds of things. At the present time scientists tell us that there are a few primary elements, or books tell us that the primary elements are five.

The five elements should be helpful to the living beings. These living beings should be protected by them. Let us say there is a king. He wants to make the five elements his own. He desires to conquer the world. He tries to bring under his power as much of the ocean as possible. He prevents the air-craft of other kings from intruding into the skies over his territory. Similarly God owns the five elements and appoints the presiding deities for them. For instance there is one who looks after the flow of water, etc. There is another who is in charge of agriculture. A third one looks after the ships that plough the seas. There is still another who is in charge of aircraft. Thus for every department there is an administrator. What is their purpose? It is to protect the people. They in turn should be maintained by the people. That is why they are made to pay taxes. Over and above these administrators there is the king. The gods are like these administrators. The king delegates some powers to the various administrators, so also Parameśvara gives to the gods their appropriate powers. The chief of the three worlds is Indra. He is a great administrator. There are gods under him. They maintain the earth. In order that they may perform their functions certain powers are given to them. Does not a king give to his officers certain powers and also arms such as guns, etc.? The administrators who are on earth derive their power from objects out side them. Parameśvara has given to the gods the power that is within them. He has imparted to them in plenty the power of knowledge and the power of action. The gods have three forms: (1) *adhyātmika,* (2) *adibhautika* and (3) *adidaivika.* In every

living being there is a god in every part thereof. This form is called *adhyātmika.* These gods remain in the respective limbs of the living being and protect them. When we do *aṅganyāsa* it is for the purpose of these gods. The officers and administrators of this world are able to understand something only when they are informed about it. But the gods who are in the body understand by themselves. In the body of every living being there is a place assigned to each one of those gods. Apart from this, *adhibhūta* is also a place. In the things that are outside the living body there are gods. If these things are impure the gods inflict punishment. At what places these gods are, the Upaniṣad explains. Besides these two places there is a third one for the gods. That place is the world of the gods. There every god is possessed of a body. In this world there are engineers who are concerned with water. They see to it that there is neither more water nor less water. If there is more water (i.e. floods) they take measures to prevent it. If there is less water they get water from somewhere else by constructing a dam where necessary. There is a greater engineer than these engineers. He is god Varuṇa. If we want to send any message the engineers in our world will send an express telegram. In the case of Varuṇa there is no need for this. At whatever part of our body we are pinched we know it at once. All water places constitute the body of Varuṇa. And so He knows at which places water is rendered impure. The crimes that we commit in this manner are made note of by an administrator called Citragupta. All water is Varuṇa's body. In every part of our body there is a god. In all the gods there

is Parameśvara. Even they do not know that He dwells within them. There is a god, namely Varuṇa, whose body is all water. In the world of the gods He is possessed of a body. In the world of the gods there are thirty-three crores of gods possessed of bodies.

The engineers in the world can do anything with water such as bringing it from one place to another or collecting it with the help of a dam, etc. only if there is rain. There is a separate water-works department. In order that it may be administered we pay a tax. Similarly should we not offer something to the engineer that is god called Varuṇa? It is wrong to say that He gives us water of His own accord. He too is a living being. He also does not know Parameśvara. Has a small official of our place seen the Emperor? No. Similarly the heavenly administrators also do not know Parameśvara. The performance of ritual is the tax that we pay to these administrators. As long as we desire to achieve something in this world through action, so long will it be necessary for us to please the gods. If not we suffer. The *Aruṇa-praśna* says: "The world of the gods is famine-ridden." It is human beings that have plenty of things. It is from here that food must be sent to the gods. They become happy when we perform ritual and when such performance decreases they suffer. Therefore it was that they went to Parameśvara and complained that performance of ritual in the world had declined and prayed to Him to set right matters.

If there is to be an *avatāra* of Parameśvara there must come about the most auspicious time. There must be parents who should have acquired great merit. There should also come the time when He could be seen by those people who had acquired the necessary merit. Those who were to serve Him should have been born. There should be the necessary planetary conjunction. Parameśvara must make His advent when all these necessary conditions are there.

Śivaguru and Āryāmbā were performing *bhajana* at Vṛṣācala. One day the Lord appeared in a dream to Śivaguru and asked him "Do you want a hundred sons or one son? If you want a hundred sons they will live long but will remain as fools. If you want to have a single son he will be a short-lived one and omniscient." Śivaguru replied: "I shall ask my wife and then make my submission." After Āryāmbā woke up Śivaguru told her of his dream. She said that she also had had a similar dream. And both of them prayed to the Lord "Please do not test us. That which You wish, please do accordingly." Then Parameśvara told them "I myself will be born as your son. But I shall stay in the world only for a few years".

After hearing this, Śivaguru and Āryāmbā went back to their village with happiness filling their hearts. After the conclusion of the *bhajana* it is usual to perform a *samārādhana*. This is not simply feeding others with food. After feeding the Brahmins in *samārādhana* Āryāmbā partook of the remaining food. Then a divine Light entered into the stomach of Āryāmbā and then she conceived and Śrī Ācārya was born. The rituals that are connected with the birth of a son were performed. On the eleventh day was the naming ceremony. In Kerala there is a custom of naming the child after the star

at the time of its birth. For instance we find among the Mahārājas of Travancore such names as Mūlam-tirunāḷ, Viśakham-tirunāḷ, etc. This custom is still followed there. Śivaguru and Āryāmbā thought at first that they could name the child in this fashion. In the old books on mathematics the texts are in verse form. The texts belonging to all other branches of knowledge are to be found in verse-form. Mathematics, music, medicine, etc., are all written down in poetical style. Why should this be so? If something is studied or spoken about, there should be no need for a book. It is not possible to frequently turn the pages of a book; therefore the topics should be such that they are fit to be contemplated. In olden times scholars were walking libraries. If the works are in verse-form it is easier to reflect on them. Even dictionaries and mathematical tables are in the form of verses. In English and other languages this is difficult to achieve. Mathematics is to be rendered in poetical form. In order to do this how should the numbers be? For this purpose there are certain signs or symbols. *Kaṭapayādi-saṅkhyā* is one such. Nine letters beginning with "ka", nine with "ta", five with "pa" and eight with "ya" are indicated by this symbol. If we say a letter included in each one of these groups then that letter would indicate the number in the order which it occupies. If a word indicates a great number it is customary to read the letters of that word in the reverse direction. For instance the number of a certain year is indicated in a context as *śaracarābde*. Here *śaracara* is the number. In order to determine the number we must read the word in the reverse direction. The first letter

then would be "ra" which falls in the group of eight letters beginning with "ya". In that group it is the second letter. And so it stands for number two. The next letter in the word is "ca" which is the sixth letter in the group of nine beginning with "ka" and therefore it signifies number six. The letter next to that is "ra" which stands for number two as already indicated. The remaining letter "śa" is the fifth letter in the group of five beginning with "ya" and therefore stands for number five. Thus the word "*śaracara*" signifies the number two-six-two-five 2625. As regards the name of our Ācārya the parents and others wanted to follow this system. They did not name him Śaṅkara after the occurrence of the word in the Veda. This word was chosen to indicate the day of his birth and it was a coincidence that it was the word Śaṅkara in the Veda. The day of Bhagavatpāda's birth was *Vaiśākha-śukla-pañcamī.* If the month, the fortnight and the day are looked at in the reverse order it would be the fifth day, the first fortnight and the second month. The letter "saṁ" stands for number five, the letter "ka" number one and the letter "ra" number two. Thus the word Śaṅkara stands for the fifth day, the first fortnight and the second month. Thus Śaṅkara became the name of Śrī Ācārya.

VIII

DETERMINATION OF THE DATE OF ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARA

We have said already that the *avatāra* of Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda took place on *Vaiśākha-śuddha-* (same as śukla) *pañcamī*. In one of the books it has been stated that the year in which he was born was *nandana*, and the star was *ārdrā*. But in order to determine Śrī Ācārya's date we must know which *nandana* year it was.

There are many views regarding Śrī Ācārya's date. There is a lapse of a long time between the dates suggested. Some say that he was born in A.D. 800. Some others assign him to the first century A.D. There is a view which considers the date to be the fifth century B.C. Between this date and the others there is a difference of one thousand years. The late Sir Subrahmanya Aiyar has argued in an issue of the journal "Theosophist" that the *avatāra* must have occurred in the fifth century B.C. As an authority for his view he cites a record preserved in the Dwāraka Maṭha. Some inscriptions belonging to Śriṅgeri Maṭha make us believe that the date was the first century A.D. Some orientalists of the West say that

Śrī Śaṅkara should be assigned to the seventh or eighth century A.D. They say this after some historical research. There are two traditional views regarding the date: one placing it in the fifth century B.C. and the other in the first century A.D. If we accept the former there are some difficulties. The date of the Buddha is accepted to be B.C. 477. If Śrī Ācārya was born in the fifth century B.C. he must have been a contemporary of the Buddha. But this will not fit in with the tradition according to which Buddhism spread in this century and preached against Vedic Dharma and Śrī Ācārya was born thereafter in order to resuscitate the path of the Veda.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and Śrī Ācārya were contemporaries. The former refuted Buddhism and established the path of Vedic *karma*. Our Ācārya criticised this view and taught that all *karmas* should be offered to God and that Advaita is the conclusive view. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa wrote a commentary on Jaimini's Mīmāṁsā Sūtra. In that commentary a statement of Kālidāsa has been quoted. Therefore Kumārila Bhṭṭa must have come after Kālidāsa. Kumārila and our Ācārya belong to the same time. So it is necessary for us to determine Kālidāsa's time. Kālidāsa's statement which is quoted by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa in his commentary is the following:

satām hi sandehapadeṣu vastuṣu pramāṇam
antaḥ karaṇa pravṛttayaḥ
[Śākuntala]

Why did Kumārila Bhaṭṭa make this citation? I am reminded of something here.

Dharma is what is to be performed for our wel-

fare. The fourteen *śāstras* which are authorities for *dharma* determine what *dharma* is. The instrument for perceiving colour is the sense of sight. The instrument for perceiving words is the sense of hearing. When he was engaged in enquiry as to what *dharma-pramāṇa* is, he had to take into account *dharma-śāstras.*

vedo'khilo dharmamūlaṁ smṛtiśīle ca tadvidām
ācāraścaiva sādhūnāṁ ātmanastuṣṭireva ca
[Manusmṛti]

The root of all dharma is Veda. Next comes *smṛti.* It recalls the teachings of the veda and serves as a note to it. What serves as the authority for dharma after the *smṛti* is the conduct of great people. This is known from the Purāṇas. Next to it is the conduct of those whom we know as cultured. This is referred to as *śiṣṭācāra.* The conduct of any and every person cannot become the model for us. It is only the conduct of the cultured that becomes authoritative. A cultured man must have faith in the *śāstras.* He must observe the disciplines mentioned in the *śāstras.* He should not fall a prey to passions such as lust and anger. The conduct of such a person becomes a *pramāṇa.* Next to that is our conscience. When our mind thinks without being sullied it is a *pramāṇa.* Kumārila discussed the nature of this conscience which is mentioned as a *pramāṇa.* When the doubt arose whether what occurs to one's mind can be a *pramāṇa* Kumārila removed the doubt saying that it also is a *pramāṇa.* This is what he has written in his commentary.

Thus in regard to accepting *pramāṇas* precedence is to be given to the Veda. Only thereafter comes

dharma-śāstra. Next to that is the conduct of great ones such as the *ṛṣis.* After all these authorities and as a last resort one must accept conscience as the authority. Now-a-days it has all become topsy-turvy. The first authority one consults is conscience. One looks into the Veda as the last authority. But the correct position is that conscience should be accepted as authoritative only in the absence of other evidences. Why is conscience called *manas-sākṣī*? It is fit only to give evidence (*sākṣī*). It cannot perform the function of the judge. One who comes to the court as a witness may utter a lie. Therefore one cannot trust the witness of speech. But the mind cannot utter a lie. The mind knows what is true and therefore we can accept the mind as a witness. Now-a-days conscience is put in the place of a judge, but this is wrong. Conscience can say truly what happened but it cannot pass judgement thereon. One should not say 'I shall act according to my conscience'. Even at the start one should not give it the status of a judge. It is only when there is no other alternative that one should address conscience and say 'You have seen everything as the witness.' At no time is it right to assign to it the status of a judge. From the *sāstras* it is known that to consider conscience as a judge is wrong.

Kumārila's citation of Kālidāsa's statement is only for the above purpose. Since Kumārila has quoted from Kālidāsa, Śaṅkara's age must be after Kālidāsa's. Of the texts which relate the life of Śrī Ācārya only the Śiva-rahasya makes mention of the date. It says that the *avatāra* occurred at least two thousand years after the beginning of Kali-yuga. If we rely on this evidence Ācārya's date must be placed between two

thousand and three thousand years after the beginning of Kali-yuga which would mean that the Master was born before Jesus Christ. According to records of the Kāñcī Maṭha, Dvārakā Maṭha and the Maṭha at Jagannath Purī we are led to think that the advent of Śrī Śaṅkara must have occurred about two thousand five hundred years ago. The reckoning preserved in the Śṛiṅgeri Maṭha puts the date as one thousand nine hundred years ago. There is difficulty in accepting the date.

The date of the Buddha is fixed as B.C. four hundred and seventy-seven. Śrī Ācārya has criticised Buddhism in his commentary on the Brahma-sūtra. Therefore Buddhism should have been popular either at the time of Śaṅkarācārya or earlier. If we are to say that Śrī Ācārya and the Buddha were contemporaries from the fact that the former has criticised Buddhism, then we would have to say that the date of the Brahma-sūtra and that of the Buddha are the same. But in the Brahma-sūtra there is reference to Buddhism. If the date of the Brahma-sūtra is the same as that of the Buddha, then the Gītā should also be assigned to the same date. But the Lord in the Gītā refers to the Brahma-sūtra in the following verse:

brahma-sūtra padaiscvaiva
hetumadbhirviniścitaiḥ
ṛṣibhir bahudhā gītam chandobhirvividhaiḥ
pṛthak

[Bhagavad-gītā, xii, 4]

It would mean then that the Buddha, Vyāsa and Kṛṣṇa were contemporaries. But Kṛṣṇa is assigned to the end of Dvāpara-yuga which is the date of the

Bhārata war. The date of the Buddha, however, as already mentioned, is B.C. four hundred and seventy seven. When we consider all this there is a lot of confusion. We may resolve this confusion. The Buddhists and the Jainas claim that their respective religions are very old. In the history books used in our schools Gautama Buddha is said to be the son of Śuddhodana. But the Buddhists maintain that Gautama was the twenty-fourth Buddha. They maintain that before Gautama there were many Buddhas. "Our religion is very ancient". In the Rāmāyaṇa too it is stated that Tathāgata should at first be driven out. From this we infer that Buddhism was prevalent during Vālmīki's time also. In the Purāṇas too there are references to the Buddha. Because there were many Buddhas and Buddhism is an ancient religion, the reference to Buddhism in the Brahma-sūtra may be intelligible. But it does not seem to be right to say that our Ācārya was a contemporary of the Tathāgata Buddha. It must have taken some time for Buddhism to spread after the Buddha's advent and its criticism by Kumārila.

Many researchers say that the Buddha passed away in B.C. four hundred and seventy-seven. This is confirmed by scholars belonging other countries. How has this view come to stay? Our children, while at school, are taught history written in this manner. They believe it to be true. This belief is difficult to dislodge. Then they say that the ages, etc. as given in the Purāṇas must be wrong and that the date that they have been taught alone is true. On what ground do they say that the Purāṇas are wrong? On what evidence has the date as they believe to be true, been

established? It is only after settling these matters that we can come to a conclusion. Blind belief will not do. The modern historians determined the date of the Buddha on one fact. Megasthenes came from Greece to this country at the time of Candragupta. The date of Megasthenes is known. From that the historians reckon the date of Candragupta and of others. What Megasthenes wrote therefore becomes the ground of the historians' conclusion. Candragupta was the king of Magadha. The age of the Magadha kings is also mentioned in our books. The historians do not accept this. If it is shown that the ground of the historians' reckoning is wrong then all will change.

What exactly has Megasthenes said? The name he has stated is 'Candra Kotus'. Historical researchers read this name as Candragupta. In the royal lineage of Magadha there was a king by name Samudragupta. Some scholars believe that Megasthenes refers to this king. Many years before Samudragupta there was Candragupta. Aśoka was his son. The Buddha belonged to this age. From this historians calculate the date of the Buddha.

If Megasthenes refers to Samudragupta and not to Candragupta, then there will be a difference of about one thousand years. I have not gone into any details of this type of research. The historians must look into this. If this view were correct, then the reckoning will have to be taken a thousand years earlier. How is the Greek word structured? Why did the historians take this word to mean Candragupta? Why should it not refer to Samudragupta? These questions must be considered.

The historian, Wilson, was the first to say that Megasthenes speaks about Candragupta. If his conclusion is wrong he is not at fault. His very discovery is a very great thing, namely that Megasthenes has mentioned the name 'Candra Kotus'. What Wilson did was not wrong. But we are at fault in accepting his statement without inquiring about the reason. If some authority makes a historical statement about our history we must ask why that statement should be accepted as true.

Even as the reformers in our day give no importance to the *Dharma-śāstras* our historians do not at all take into consideration the traditional reckoning of dates. They believe that it is all wrong. The reformers do not ask the question: Is this-worldly pleasure enough; is there no need for heavenly happiness? They do not consider that the one aim of the *Dharma-śāstras* is to show the way to gain heavenly happiness. The reformers do not understand that this-worldly pleasures alone will not do. For them *Dharma-śāstra* is all wrong. What is stated therein is superstition to be believed in blindly. Therefore they reject the *Dharma-śāstras* on account of preconceived notions. If they had had faith, knowledge of virtue and sin, and of the customs and traditions of good people as also an acquaintance with our ancient texts even from their early childhood days they would not have come to the hasty conclusion that the *Dharma-śāstra* is all wrong. What is true of *Dharma-śāstra* is true of our history also.

Last year in England there was a conference of historians and philosophers. They passed a resolution saying that because of reform in India there is

great damage to its culture and that the rate of this damage should be lessened. The resolution itself is a revealing wonder to us who have descended so low. If we do not attend properly to our history and *Dharma-śāstras* we will lose the profits that we can gain from them. Even the Westerners say that our culture should be preserved.

Just as history changes with time the reformers think even scripture (*śruti*), traditional code (*smṛti*) and *purāṇas* should change. If these were concerned only with social matters they may change. But they have a spiritual purport. That which is related to spirituality will never change. If scriptures, etc. were intended for earthly gains they may get changed but they are texts which have the Self as their primary purport. The reformers without giving proper thought say that what is stated in the texts is false. Looking at the Veda from a historical standpoint the scholars say it has undergone change with changing time. But what we must look at is *Dharma*. There are many things that are wrong in history. But we take them for gospel truths.

Out of a wrong attitude towards our tradition many laws and acts are passed. All this evil has come through English education. Have responsible people studied the *śāstras*? Have they tried to shape their lives according to the scriptural injunctions? Is there *ācāra* in them? There is nothing of the sort. But they have no hestitation in saying blindly that all the *śāstras* are wrong. They acquire knowledge that comes from the West and they adopt modes of life that they learn from the West. They take to Western education for making a living. They do not

inquire into the truth. They belittle what is great in our culture. Without following this path we must pause and consider what is stated in our scriptures and *Dharma-śāstras*. If Megasthenes refers to Samudragupta as Candra Kotus then there will be a great difference in the reckoning of dates. That would result in accepting our tradition. Therefore the historians must give some thought to this hypothesis.

From the Śiva-rahasya and from the tradition of our Maṭha it is learnt that the date of Śrī Ācārya should be placed earlier than two thousand years ago. We have already seen that if Kālidāsa's date is known it will facilitate the fixing of Śrī Ācārya's age. Scholars have in a way settled Kālidāsa's date. In an inscription belonging to the age of king Ravikīrti the names of Bhāravi and Kālidāsa are mentioned. That Ravikīrti was a poet. It is stated in that inscription that the king became famous even as Kālidāsa and Bhāravi. The following is a *śloka* where this has been stated.

sa vijayatām ravikīrtiḥ kavitāśrita
kālidāsabhāravikīrtiḥ

Now we shall continue to relate the story of Śrī Ācārya.

Śrī Ācārya made his advent (*avatāra*). The *upanayana* ceremony (investiture with the sacred thread) was performed to him when he was five years old. There are two kinds of *upanayanas* — *Kāmyopanayana* and *nityopanayana*. The usual *upanayana* is to be performed when a boy is seven years old. If one desires *brahmatejas* (the light of *Brahman*-knowledge) the *upanayana* may be performed in

the fifth year. Until the Ācārya was three years old he learnt the languages of the land. Until his fifth year he studied the Sanskrit language and gained mastery over it. After the *upanayana* in the fifth year and by the time he was eight he had mastered the Veda and the *śāstras*. After the *upanayana* he went to live with a *guru*, studied the Vedas there and returned to his house when he was eight years old. Meanwhile his father had passed away. He thought within himself "We have not come here to live in a household. We have come to serve the world." To fulfil this mission he wanted to enter the *sannyāsa-āśrama*. But his mother greatly desired to see her only son properly married. The Ācārya knew that if he were to ask his mother permission for taking *sannyāsa* she would be very sorry.

One day his mother was not well. A river by the name Cūrṇā flows through the village. The mother was feeling very weak. She said to her son "I have to bathe but my body is not strong enough to walk to the river." The river was at a distance from his house. The Ācārya prayed that the river should alter its course and flow by the side of the house. There was a Kṛṣṇa temple in between. When the river changed its course the temple was destroyed. Then at the instance of the Ācārya the king of the place had the temple reconstructed.

He made his mother take her bath in the river. He too entered the river for a bath. Then a crocodile got hold of his leg. Even now in that river there are many crocodiles. When his leg was caught by the crocodile the Ācārya began to say to his mother: "Now the crocodile has caught my leg. It

is certain that I will die. If I embrace *sannyāsa-āśrama* now, at least mentally, it would be tantamount to taking another birth, then the *prārabdha* may also change. Because of this, death also may not come. One should not take *sannyāsa* without the consent of one's mother. If I take *sannyāsa* there is a chance of survival. If I do not take *sannyāsa* death is certain. It will be a bad death and you will lose your son and he will not be there to perform the last rites to you. If I take *sannyāsa* now I will realize *mokṣa* and you too will gain the *tejas* of the good. Twenty-one generations of our family will be saved. Even though I take *sannyāsa* I shall perform the last rites for you".

There is a story relating to Vidyāraṇya's assumption of *sannyāsa*. In his *pūrva-āśrama* (earlier stage in life) he performed *tapas* invoking the grace of Goddess Lakṣmī. She appeared and told him "in this birth you cannot have my grace". At once he took *sannyāsa*. This was in fact like taking another birth. He obtained the grace of Lakṣmī. Immense wealth came to him. Of what use is wealth to a *sannyāsin*? Vidyāraṇya established a great kingdom. Hampi was created by him. Kṛṣṇadevarāya and his successors won pervasive fame. After the Vijayanagar empire declined, there came into being the rule of Nayaks in Madurai. Kings who came from the Vijayanagar family ruled places like Mysore and Tiruccirāppalli. Vidyāraṇya had renovated many old Maṭhas. He established also a few new ones. There are some *smārta*-maṭhas in Mysore which were started by him. In the Andhra country also there are some. Madhvācārya was born at that time. It seemed as though

Advaita would be eaten up by Dvaita. There was also Muslim rule in the country. In order to remove these two obstacles, the aid of *śāstra* and weapons were needed. For this purpose Vidyāraṇya established Maṭhas and a kingdom. He also wrote books dealing with Self-knowledge. He wrote several works born of the highest experience, such as Pañcadaśa-prakaraṇa, Jīvanmukti-viveka and Vayāsika-nyāya-mālā, etc. He was responsible also for writing a commentary on the four Vedas. Vidyāraṇya took *sannyāsa* which was like taking another birth. He obtained the grace of Lakṣmī, acquired great wealth but did not use it for his selfish purpose. He spent it for helping the world. I have related this story in order to show that taking *sannyāsa* is like being reborn.

Śrī Ācārya's mother heard what he said. But what could she do? She said to him "You do what you think is proper". When Lord Śiva appeared to her in Trichur in response to the austerity which she and her husband had performed wishing for a child she told the Lord: "Please do what you think is best". In the same way now she said this to her son. Was it not the same Lord who had become her son? Even while being in the river the Ācārya decided to take *sannyāsa*. At once the crocodile released his leg. There was seen in a chariot in the sky a *gandharva*. He prostrated before the Ācārya. This was a wonder to the Ācārya. The *gandharva* made known his identity.

Gandharvas are endowed with divine vision. They are a sub-class among the gods. What we are not able to see with our naked eyes can be seen if we use appropriate scientific instruments. Similarly the *gandharvas* seem to have some power in their eyes through which they are able to see what ordinary human beings cannot see. People of the modern age dismiss all this as superstition and mythology.

Gandharvas are happy-go beings. They enjoy drink, song etc. That is why the science of music is called gāndharva-veda.

That *gandharva* said to the Ācārya: "Once I was drunk and listening to music forgetting myself. At that time sage Durvāsa came along. He is completely alien to such modes of pleasure. Because I was not myself then, I did not recognise the sage. He cursed me saying: 'You are like a crocodile, may you be born as a crocodile'. Then I came to my senses, fell at his feet and asked for pardon. The sage said: 'The curse that I gave you is inescapable, but your birth as a crocodile will be useful in a way. The Lord Śiva is going to be born in the world. If you catch hold of his leg you will be released from the curse. In order to catch hold of his leg go to Kālaḍi and remain there.' This is my story." After relating this the *gandharva* took leave of the Ācārya and went away.

When her son had obtained release from the crocodile his mother was greatly pleased. She said to him: "Do come, my son, hereafter you can get married". When he heard this the Ācārya said "Hereafter I am not the child of any single household. I am the child of every family. All houses belong to me. Do not forget that you gave me permission to

take *sannyāsa*". Saying "I must leave" he made obeisance to his mother.

sarvavandyena yatinā prasur-vandhyā hi
sādaram

Although a *sannyāsi* is bowed to by all he should bow to his mother. "Hereafter, for me, mother father, children are all different from ordinary ones."

bhikṣāpradā jananyaḥ pitaro guravaḥ kumārakāḥ
śiṣyāḥ ekāntaramanahetuḥ śāntir-dayitā
viraktasya
[Nītivairāgya Śatakam]

"There is not one mother for me. All those who give alms are my mothers. He who gives me instruction in knowledge is my father. All those who come to me as pupils are my children. Thus there is going to be a great family. I shall take leave of you now. Yet whenever you think of me I shall come and remain by your side." Saying this the Ācārya left in search of a *guru* in order to take regular *sannyāsa*.

IX

ŚRĪ ĀCĀRYA'S JÑĀNA-PRACĀRA

Before he entered *sannyāsa āśrama* Śrī Ācārya as a *brahmacārin* lived by begging alms. On a certain *Dvādaśī* day he went to the house of a poverty-stricken person for *bhikṣā* (alms). He went there in order to bestow on him his grace. That person was extremely poor. Every day he used to go out to gather rice by begging and he and his wife would eat by cooking the rice. When Śrī Ācārya went to his house he had gone out. The wife of the house-holder was there. She looked at the young *brahmacārin* and thought: 'This boy is brilliant spiritually and if I give him *bhikṣā* great benefit will accrue.' The moment one saw the young Ācārya one recognised his greatness at once. The *Brahmin* woman made a thorough search in her house for something which could be offered as *bhikṣā*. Nothing was to be found. At last she came across a myrobalam fruit which her husband had kept for the *Dvādaśī* meal but even that fruit was not in a condition to be eaten. She thought "How can I give this as *bhikṣā*?" Finally with great pain in her heart she offered it to the Ācārya. The Ācārya realized the true devotion of the *Brahmin* lady and

wished to remove the poverty of that *Brahmin* couple. Immediately he thought of Goddess Lakṣmī and composed the hymn Kanakadhārāstava in which he praised the Goddess for conferring wealth on the couple. There was an invisible voice which said: "These two people had sinned in their previous lives. They are destined to remain poor for a long time. If this be not the case their sins will not go." In response the Ācārya said: "the *bhikṣā* which the Brahmin lady has given me is capable of cancelling the sin even if it were to be more than what the couple had committed." Immediately the house-hold was filled with wealth of all sorts. This incident happened when Śrī Ācārya was a *brahmacārin.*

After taking leave of his mother Śrī Ācārya started on his journey in search of a *guru* from whom he could take regular *sannyāsa.* Śrī Ācārya was an *avatāra* of Lord Śiva. For him there was no need of a *guru.* Yet he wanted to follow the rule that obtained in the world. If he himself did not seek a *guru* others would follow his example and think that a *guru* was not necessary. Therefore in order to show the right path to the world he went in search of his *guru.* Some texts say that he saw his *guru* on the banks of the river Narmadā. According to some other texts the place where he met his *guru* is Badarikāśrama.

Śrī Ācārya took regular *sannyāsa* from Govinda Bhagavatpāda. The *guru* commanded the Ācārya to write a commentary on the Brahma-sūtra. For this purpose Śrī Ācārya left for Kāśī. Remaining there he commenced to write the commentary staying in the

Mukti-maṇḍapa at the Maṇikarnikāghāt. He was giving his teaching to *śiṣyās* who went to him.

Kāśī is a most holy place. In that place the Lord Śiva Viśveśvara releases every living being that dies there by imparting knowledge to it. Apart from this special feature there are other excellences also associated with the place. In our country there are many religions. Representatives of all these religions would be found to live there. At the time of Śrī Ācārya, Kāśī was the dwelling place of great *paṇḍitas.* People who go on pilgrimage go to Kāśī and stay there for some time. There are so many castes, many religions and many languages. All of them are represented in Kāśī. Śrī Ācārya thought that if he started his mission of spreading knowledge there, it would reach the entire world. Pious people belonging to many countries were residing in Kāśī and so the writing of the commentary at that place facilitated the spread of the knowledge expounded therein throughout the world. Śrī Ācārya showed the defects in the doctrines of the many religions and established the truth as taught in the Upaniṣads.

One day sage Vyāsa resolved to meet Śrī Śaṅkara directly and bestow his grace on him. It was he that had asked Govinda Bhagavatpāda to give the instruction to Śrī Śaṅkara who was an *avatāra* of the Lord Śiva. Sage Vyāsa wanted to make known to the entire world that the commentary of Śrī Śaṅkara alone was the true one and would help the world in understanding the truth. He planned to do this by raising all sorts of objections and making Śrī Śaṅkara give proper answers to them. For this purpose he went to the place where Śrī Śaṅkara was, disguised as

an old *Brahmin*. He entered into an argument with the Ācārya. The purpose of this was to make the world understand the excellence of Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya*. The debate was long and acute. Those people who were witnesses to this debate were seized with great fright. Padmapāda, a disciple of Śrī Ācārya who was there, saw through his eye of knowledge that the visitor was no other than sage Vyāsa.

śaṁkaraḥ śaṁkaraḥ sakṣādvyāso
nārāyaṇaḥ svayam
tayorvivāde saṁprāpte kiṁkaraḥ
kiṁ karomyaham

"Vyāsa is an *avatāra* of Nārāyaṇa. Śrī Ācārya is Śaṅkara (i.e. Śiva). If these two debated with each other in this manner, what am I 'a servant' to do?" Thus Padmapāda thought within himself. He prayed to the old *Brahmin* visitor. "If this commentary reflects truly the heart of your teaching then please assume your real form." At once Vyāsa appeared in his true form. Then Śrī Śaṅkara addressed the sage and said: "The purpose for which I came to the world is over. I have completed sixteen years. Now I must go back, please bless me." Vyāsa thereupon said to Śrī Śaṅkara: "I shall grant you sixteen more years. It is not enough that you have written the commentary. What is taught there must be made known in many parts of the country. So you must undertake a tour, meet leaders of different traditions and establish the Vedāntic truth." In accordance with this command Śrī Śaṅkarācārya undertook his tour of victory (*dig-vijaya*).

Reference has been made to Padmapāda. He became Śrī Ācārya's disciple in Kāśī. There is a story

regarding the name Padmapāda which was given to this disciple.

One day Padmapāda was on the bank of the river Gaṅgā opposite to that where Śrī Śaṅkara was. Padmapāda was holding in his hand Śrī Śaṅkara's clothes. After taking his bath in the river Śrī Śaṅkara was with his wet clothes on. The Gaṅgā was flowing full with a flood. Śrī Śaṅkara wanted the world to understand the nature of Padmapāda's devotion through a test. He called to Padmapāda and said: "Bring the clothes." The duty of a disciple is to fulfil the command of his *guru* without hesitation. When Padmapāda heard his *guru's* command, it never occurred to him that the river was deep. He started walking on it. The river-goddess Gaṅgā caused a lotus to bloom at every step that Padmapāda took while walking across, in order to support him. He reached the other bank of the river and gave the clothes to Śrī Ācārya. Every one thus came to know the intense devotion of Padmapāda to his *guru*. It was from this incident that the disciple came to be known by the name Padmapāda. The onlookers who were there asked the disciple in wonder "How were you able to cross the river Gaṅgā?" This disciple replied: "The mere remembrance of Śrī Ācārya is capable of making the ocean of *saṁsāra* knee-deep and is it a great thing that the flood of the Ganges did not affect me in the least when I was fulfilling his command?"

We shall now refer to certain details regarding Padmapāda's antecedent life. He was born in the *Coḷa* country. He received initiation of Nṛsimha-*mantra* from a great man. He wanted to do *japa* of this *mantra* and as a result of it get the blessing of

seeing the form of Nṛsimha. He desired to do the *japa* in an isolated place. He went to a mountain, climbed it and sat in a place for performing *tapas*.

At that time a hunter who lived in that area came there. He thought within himself "Who is this Brahmin who has come here, and what for?" He went up to Padmapāda and said to him: "We live here by hunting the animals that roam about; why have you come here? You will have to meet with great difficulties in this place." Padmapāda thought "If I tell the hunter 'I have come here to see the Nṛsimha-*mūrti*, and dwelling in this place I want to perform *tapas*' he will not understand." And so he told him "I have come to see Nṛsimha; it is to be found in places like this." The hunter asked Padmapāda in wonder "What is Nṛsimha? Is it a lion? It seems to be something new. How will it look like?" Padmapāda replied: "Below the hip it will have the human form and above the hip the form of a lion." The hunter asked for further details and then said: "I am asking you this, you must tell me the truth, is it really present in this forest?" "Yes, certainly" said Padmapāda. The hunter said: "I know every inch of this forest. There is no animal inhabiting this forest which I have not seen. There is no one who knows more about this place than I. Tell me the truth: have you really come here to see that animal? If so you need not worry, as you do not know how to catch animals. I shall catch and show it to you. If I know that this animal is actually here I shall find it and show it to you and you can return to your place." On hearing these words Padmapāda laughed. The hunter told him: "Do not laugh, but you must tell

me for certain if this animal lives in this forest." Padmapāda replied: "It is surely here but you cannot see it." The hunter finally said: "I shall show it to you before tomorrow evening. If I do not succeed I shall not live in this body. You have come here braving all the difficulties in search of this animal. What other work can I have except to search for it and show it to you? If I do not do this, there is no use of my being here as a hunter." Padmapāda remarked: "All right, what can I say if you are adamant?"

The hunter started on his mission of seeing Nṛsimha. He combed the entire forest. In his mind there was no thought other than that of Nṛsimha. With this thought always in his mind he was roaming about in the forest. He did not even eat food. He could not see Nṛsimha anywhere. That day passed. The evening of the next day also came. The hunter thought: "I have failed in my mission and there is no use of keeping this body alive hereafter. That Brahmin could not have uttered a lie. I promised to him that I would show the animal to him before this evening. This has not been possible. There is no other alternative than to commit suicide." He cut a few creepers, tied them to a tree and leaning on that tree he tied himself too with the idea of dying there.

It was dusk then. An animal came and stood before him. The Lord Nṛsimha came there to appear before the hunter, being pleased with his mental one-pointedness. The hunter saw the Lord. What he saw was exactly the same as the Brahmin had described. He was overwhelmed with joy. He said: "O nasty animal! should you take such a long time to come here? Why have you given me so much trouble? Hereafter

I will not let you go!" He untied the creeper and with it he tied the lion and dragged it to the place where the Brahmin was. He addressed the Brahmin and said: "Oh! look here, is this not the animal you have been wanting to see?" Padmāpada could not see anything but the creeper. He heard only the sound. The hunter said: "You take this Nṛsimha and go home satisfied." Sorrow overwhelmed Padmapāda. He cried out addressing the Lord: "You have shown Yourself to this uncultured hunter and not to me." At that time he heard an invisible voice. It said: "This hunter succeeded in attaining intense one-pointedness of mind which cannot be gained even after performance of *dhyāna* for crores of years. He accomplished it in a single day placing his life as wager. He roamed about in search of Me without food and sleep. Even *ṛṣis* have not performed such *tapas*. You are fortunate in getting acquainted with this hunter who is a great *bhakta* (devotee). Although you do not see My form, you have been blessed at least by hearing My voice. You have gained *mantra-siddhi*. Hereafter I shall appear before you when there is need."

It was after this incident that that *Brahmin* went to Śrī Ācārya and became his disciple. One day a Kāpālika approached Śrī Ācārya. The Kāpālikas belong to a school of Śaiva tradition. They carry a skull, wear a garland made of bones and live at cremation-grounds. They eat flesh etc. Worship of this sort is *vāmācāra* (left-handed practice). Śrī Ācārya condemned this tradition. The Kāpālika who went to Śrī Ācārya could not give any proper answer to the criticisms levelled against his school. He planned to kill the Ācārya. He thought within himself:

"His heart is filled with great compassion and therefore I shall express my prayer to him." When the Ācārya was alone he went to him and paid obeisance saying: "I am a Kāpālika. I worship Śiva as Kāpāli. So far I have offered many sacrifices but the Lord has not appeared before me. He said 'I shall appear before you if you sacrifice the head of either a crowned king or that of a sage who is endowed with *siddhis* (supernormal powers) as also Self-knowledge. If you go to a king and say this to him my head will go first. You are extremely compassionate and therefore I have come to you being convinced that you will be able to make me gain my heart's desire." On hearing this Śrī Ācārya was overjoyed. He thought within himself: "Oh! what an opportunity. Even this body could be of use. Ordinarily it is of no use at all. If a tree withers it can be used as fuel. The horns of cattle are put to a variety of uses. Similar is the case with the ivory of elephants. The skin of a deer is used as a seat. It is the human body that cannot be put to any use. This Kāpālika has asked for this body for achieving his purpose." Thinking thus Śrī Ācārya felt very happy. He told the Kāpālika: "All right. The disciples who are with me should not come to know of this. If they come to know they will cause hindrances. I shall be seated alone and meditating. You may come then and take my head away." The Kāpālika on hearing this was very pleased and he went away. After some time he came again when Śrī Ācārya was alone. The disciples had gone out somewhere. The Kāpālika unsheathed his knife. At that time Padmapāda came running from somewhere. At once a sound was heard "Ha, ha!" Śrī Ācārya opened

his eyes and saw that the Kāpālika's body was rent asunder. Padmapāda was standing there. Śrī Ācārya asked him: "What is this? Who has done this?" Padmapāda replied: "I do not know anything, I was near the river Gaṅgā. Then I felt something within me. It is now that I have got back my consciousness." Śrī Śaṅkara asked him: "Did you have any *mantra-upadeśa* earlier?" Padmapāda replied: "I had one. But I did not gain anything from it. I have done *japa* of Nṛsimha-*mantra* but Lord Nṛsimha deceiving me made His appearance before a hunter, and at that time the Lord said: 'I shall come when you are in need.' It seems that now at this time He came as Āveśa. At this critical time, since He has come, there cannot be a more appropriate occasion for Him to appear." Śrī Śaṅkara came to know that when Padmapāda was near the river, Nṛsimha-āveśa had entered him and he had come running and had torn the Kāpālika's body into two.

One day Śrī Ācārya went to the river Gaṅgā for a bath. Then on the way a Caṇḍāla came near him. The Ācārya asked him to get away. The untouchable addressed a few questions to Śrī Śaṅkara.

annamayād annamayam athavā caitanyam eva
caitanyāt
dvijavara dūrīkartum vāñchasi kim brūhi
gaccha gaccheti
[Manīṣāpañcakam Bṛhatstotram]

"You are asking something to get away. What should get away from what? Is it your intention that the body made of flesh and bones etc. which is a product of food, should get away? What is your view, oh, the best among Brahmins, please give me a reply.

You say 'go, go'!" This was the question asked by the Caṇḍāla. Śrī Ācārya thought that someone had come to challenge him in accordance with a plan previously made. But the person who had come was one who wanted to remove all struggle. He did not stop with that question. Were that so Śrī Śaṅkara would have proceeded in another direction. If the untouchable pursued him he would have descended into the river, but the untouchable spoke further as follows:

kim gaṅgāmbuni bimbite'mbaramaṇau
caṇḍālavāṭīpayaḥ
pūre cāntaramasti kāñcanaghaṭīmṛt
kumbayorvāmbare
pratayagvastuni nistaraṅgasahajānandava-
bodhāmbuddhau
vipro'yam śvapaco' yam ityapi mahān ko'yam
vibheda-bhramaḥ.
[Manīṣāpañcakam Bṛhat-stotram]

"What lesson are you teaching? Is it Vedanta? What is stated therein? Is it said there that this person is different from that person?"

The Lord Kṛṣṇa has said in the Bhagavad-Gītā:

vidyāvinayasampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śvapāke ca paṇḍitāḥ samadarśinaḥ
[Bhagavad-Gītā, v. 18]

What is taught in this verse is the same as what the Cāṇḍāla said to the Ācārya. The thought is the same.

"How did you fall a prey to this great delusion? What are we? We are the same Godhead. You say 'I am Brahman, I am Śiva'. What is the meaning of these statements?"

There are two ways in which we can understand the statement 'we are the same Godhead.' When the sun is shining bright, if we immerse a hand in water, take it out and spray the water there would be a thousand drops. In each one of those drops there would be a sun. The one sun appears as a thousand. And the sun's size also would depend upon the size of the medium of reflection. The view which gives us this example is known as *biṁba-pratibiṁba-vāda*. If the drops of water are destroyed then there will be no reflection. It is in our mind that we think the reflection to be different. If the engine runs, electricity is produced, and from that we get light. If the engine stops, electricity would also stop. There would be no light either. The mind is what runs. If that running is stopped, then there will be no mind. Then there will be no reflection either.

There is another view which is known as *avacchinna-vāda*. There is a tank filled with water. If a vessel is immersed in it and dragged along, the water that is within it and the water that is in the tank are the same. There is no difference between the two But when the vessel is dragged while being immersed, the water within it appears to move along with it.

The same ether is everywhere. It is called *akāśa* because it accommodates all things — *avakāśastu akāśam*. The all-pervasive ether is called *mahākāśa*. There is ether within a pot. This is known as *ghaṭākāśa*. *Ghaṭa* means pot. When the pot is destroyed we imagine that the pot-ether is also destroyed. As long as the pot is not destroyed we think that the ether within it is big or small or that it moves in accordance with the dimensions and movements of the pot.

But all these differences are illusory. So also the supreme Self appears different on account of the minds that seem to condition it. If a vessel is big the water within it seems to be big. If the vessel is small the water too appears small. If the vessel is broken then these differences vanish. Similarly if the mind goes, then the notion of difference also goes. This is what *avacchinna-vāda* says. The question that the Caṇḍāla asked the Ācārya was based on both these views.

The sun is reflected in the Gaṅgā-water as also in the pots in the localities where Caṇḍālas live. Is there any difference between the two reflections? Is there any difference in the ether which is in a vessel made of gold and that which is in a mud-pot? There is a reality within the body. It is of the nature of bliss. How can there be difference in it? The Self is all-pervasive. It is like the ocean. It cannot be compared even to the ocean because the ocean is not everywhere. Is the ocean now here? No. Even where it is, is it full? Even there it does not exceed a limit. If that were so why should the ocean be given as an example? The reason is that of the things that we know the ocean is vast. Therefore it should be given as an example. Which ocean did the untouchable cite as an example? The ocean that is in the world has both salt and water. The Self is both bliss and knowledge. It is both unexcellable bliss and limitless knowledge. In the ocean there are many waves. But in the Self there are no waves. Why? In the world above the ocean, there is space. Therefore waves lash at the shore but there is no space where the Self is not. It is all-filling, therefore there

are no waves. If a vessel is filled with water and tightly closed, will there be ripples in it?

In the Self which is of such nature how can there be difference? This is what the untouchable asked. All may expect a reply from the Ācārya in accordance with *Dharma śāstra.* But actually the reply that he gave was according to the highest knowledge. The question was from the standpoint of knowledge and therefore the reply too was from the same standpoint. Śrī Ācārya said to the Caṇḍāla: "You are a wise person, whoever may be such a wise one — a knower of Brahman — he is my *guru.*" We too are ready to pay obeisance to such great ones, and all should be so ready. The Veda says that when that state of knowledge is reached, a Caṇḍāla is not a Caṇḍāla, a Brahmin is not a Brahmin, Veda is not Veda. Śrī Śaṅkara spoke the same truth to that untouchable in five *ślokas.*

jāgrat-svapna-suṣuptiṣu sphuṭatarā yā
saṁvid-ujjṛmbhate
yā brahmādi-pipīlikānta-tanuṣu protā
jagat-sakṣiṇī

If this type of firm knowledge is found in anyone — the knowledge that from Brahmā to an ant the supreme Brahman that is "I", that since I am the knowing knowledge I am not the objects of knowledge — then whether he be a Caṅḍāla or a Brahmin that one is my *guru.* This is the purport of that verse. In this manner the Ācārya sang five verses. They constitute what is known as the Manīṣā-pañcakam.

Who was that untouchable? He was Lord Viśveśvara Himself. He came in order to test Śrī Ācārya.

He wanted to know if he had the state of knowledge in actual experience. He did so in order to show to the world the greatness of the Ācārya and thus to give to it the greatest benefit. If the world itself is made to recognize the greatness it would be better for it. If one were to speak about one's own greatness then he would be regarded as an egoistic person. If that greatness becomes known without any effort on his part it will be extremely luminous.

We shall see what Śrī Ācārya has said in this poem. How are we to look at all living beings in the world as identical with ourselves? When should there be knowledge of difference? And when will knowledge of non-difference come?

There are three states of experience: waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*), and deep sleep (*suṣupti*). The waking state is the ordinary empirical state when we are awake. In the state of dream we see dreams; deep-sleep is the state where we do not see anything. In all the three states the person is identical. The dreamer is the same as the one who is awake but there is no relation between the happenings in the dream and those that take place in the state of waking. The phenomena of dream are of one type and those of the state of waking are of another type. Although the states differ and the mental attitudes differ the person who experiences them is the same. Similarly it is we that are in all those states of experience.

We are in one condition, peaceful in nature. In another condition we are angry. But in both these conditions we are identical. This we can know

through our experience. In the different states the bodies differ, even the mind differs. When we reflect on the constitution of the body and the mind, it seems as though there is no relation between the one and the other. When we are awake we know that we should not commit certain acts. But in dream we commit them. Although we perform in the different states acts incompatible with one another and although the body and mind are different, we know that it is the same person that goes through these states. If we suffer from a serious fever and as a result we are beside ourselves we do things which are opposed to our normal deeds. For instance, we tear up a book which we had written formerly. The one who wrote is the same as the one who tore it up later. In the same way if another person tears up the book he too is us but because we are in two different bodies the two opposite acts occur at the same time. If a person beats us it is wrong to think that it is another person that is beating us. The truth is that we are beating ourselves. We must acquire the experience when we will look at the entire world in this manner. If all are one there cannot be any difference between ourself and others. In this state even the world will cease to be an object known. We will have the experience that we who see are the same as the object seen. Now we consider our hands as ourselves, our legs as ourselves and the body as ourselves.

If one gets the plenary self-knowledge he is a *paṇḍita* even though he may be a *Caṇḍāla*. Śrī Ācārya teaches this in the Manīṣāpañcakam. I shall cite another verse from this composition,

yatsaukhyāmbudhileśaleśata ime śakrādayo nirvṛtā
yaścitte nitarām praśāntakalane labdhvā munirnirvṛtaḥ
yasminnityasukhāmbuddhau galitadhīrbrahmaiva nabrahmavidyah
kaścitsa surendravanditapadonūnam manīṣā mama

[Manīṣāpañcakam 5]

The Veda, the Bhagavad-Gītā and other texts teach the same truth that is taught in this verse. Śrī Ācārya did two things: first he asked the *Caṇḍāla* to get away and then he himself offered obeisance to him. "I did not at first think that you are a sage. If you are a knower of *Brahman* you yourself are my *guru*." Thus saying he offered obeisance to him.

If we see the same Self everywhere, then we will not get angry at something and we will not be afraid of something else. Are we afraid of ourselves? Are we angry at ourselves? This is not the case. Similarly if we have the experience that all are we, then fear, etc. will leave. It is in order to attain this state that we must control ourselves.

Through the sense-organs we get some desires. Some taste arises in us of its own accord. We must control it little by little. The *śāstra* says: "As long as you have a desire to see, you must reduce the range of seeing, i.e., some of the things you should not see. As long as there is a desire to eat, you must reduce the range of your eating, i.e., you should not eat some things. As long as there is a desire to touch, you should restrain yourself from touching something. If

the desire to touch is gone then you may touch everything."

Śukācārya became a wandering monk even at birth. He ran from his house, and his father Vyāsa, because of affection for his son, ran after him. At a certain place women were bathing. Seeing Śuka it did not occur to them that they should be ashamed. Then came Vyāsa. At once shyness came to them. Vyāsa it was who wrote the Brahma-sūtra; yet there was a difference between him and his son Śuka. As long as one desires something there will be this difference and as long as that difference lasts, one should obey the dictates of the *śāstras*.

At first Śrī Śaṅkara said "Get away", following worldly usage. When he came to know that the *Caṇḍāla* was a sage he said to himself: "If you are a *Brahman*-knower I bow to you." It was the Lord Viśveśvara Himself that came as the *Caṇḍāla* in order to show the world the greatness of Śrī Śaṅkara in the sphere of *jñāna*. Our Ācārya has stated everywhere that we must follow our *dharma* in accordance with the *śāstras*. He did not change *śāstraic* practices. He came for the specific purpose of bestowing *jñāna* to the world. He also taught that the disciplines of *dharma* constitute the means to gaining knowledge.

In order that each *jīva* could gain release, graded disciplines have been taught. These disciplines are intended to guide the *jīva* to the final goal and not to make it happy merely in this world. In the matter of practising a discipline there is an order. All persons cannot do all things. There must be one for each type of function. Only then all can live happily. One

person should do agriculture, another trade, another fight for right causes, and a fourth should study. Thus different duties are assigned to different persons. Only then there will accrue general good. All these functions are essential. Difficulties will arise even if there be one function less. All cannot do everything. In a family, salt is necessary as also mustard, cloth, books, etc. There should be a house, a courtyard and so many other things. We may think that we ourselves may attend to all things. We may grow mustard, we may pick salt, we may spin and weave, but this is not possible. It is not possible to manufacture all things in one and the same house. The jaggery that is manufactured in a factory is for all people. The manufacturer also gains the benefit from it. In this way what each person does, benefits himself and others. Because we have something to gain we love our child. The child also gains from it. We think that the happiness is ours alone but if we do not love the child it will not grow. The disciplines of karma are intended for mutual benefit.

In the world there are many types of action. The higher the type of action, the greater are the restrictions attached to it. Those who perform these actions must eat only *sāttvika* food. They must be quiet and peaceful. On some days they must not eat at all. Can all people live like this? If all were to observe fasts how could factories function? Then the wrong conclusion will be drawn that there is no need for the above-mentioned restrictions. But these restrictions must be there but all cannot observe them. If they try to do this the world will suffer. Each class of people has been following certain injunctions and

performing functions appropriate to them. For people who have to do acts with their bodies their intellect need not be over-developed. For those people who have to work with their intellect, no great attention need be bestowed on their body. Both these functions are necessary for the world. If they are wrongly mixed up then both functions will disappear. Both of them constitute the work of God. Some people work in offices. There is a separate office building. For eating there is a dining hall. School buildings are different. If all these are mixed, what a mess it would be.

In the matter of performing duties one person is not higher and another lower. All do their deeds for a common purpose. Instead of everyone acting according to his rights, it is better to perform those actions which have come through generations. Acting in this manner will lead to self-purification. It is not possible to say when these disciplines came first into existence. While the traditions of others have known beginnings, ours have come down from the time of creation. If we try to change, our common doctrines suffer. We have fallen low because we have started doing whatever occurs to our minds. If one fence is broken all fences will fall. If we dare to transgress one injunction then it will lead to transgression of all injunctions.

It is wrong to make changes in the *śāstra*. In the name of reform the so-called reformers only succeed in deforming. True reform should aim at prevention of actions which are opposed to *śāstra*. If we conduct ourselves with devotion to truth and faith in the *śāstras* then no force will be able to oppose us. Thus

it is clear that Śrī Śaṅkarācārya did not compose the Manīṣāpañcakam for upsetting *karmānuṣṭhana*. The state described therein will come to those who have the experience of *jñāna*. Lord Viśveśvara came as a *Caṇḍāla* in order to see if Śrī Ācārya had that experience. And He made the entire world realize that the Ācārya had the plenary experience.

Then Śrī Śaṅkarācārya undertook a tour of victory (*digvijaya*) as directed by Vyāsa. He went round this country three times. It was during one of those journeys that he met the Kāpālika mentioned already.

X

VICTORY OVER MAṆḌANA MIŚRA

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya wrote his commentary on the Brahma-sūtra in Kāśī. Later Sage Vyāsa debated with him in the guise of an old Brahmin and at the end augmented the Ācārya's period of life from sixteen years to thirty-two and asked him to undertake a tour of victory. It was at Kāśī that Lord Viśveśvara came as a Caṇḍāla and the Ācārya composed the Manīṣā-pañcakam. Even before that, as already mentioned, Padmapādācārya had received that name. All these four were important incidents that took place while the Ācārya resided in Kāśī.

The Ācārya started his *dig-vijaya* by proceeding in the easterly direction. It was at Prayāga that he met Kumārila Bhaṭṭa when the latter was immolating himself. The Ācārya converted him by making him convinced that the path of *karma* alone will not do. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa said to the Ācārya: "This truth must be made known to the entire world. In my present condition I cannot undertake this mission. If you go to Maṇḍana Miśra and win him over to the path of *jñāna* the entire world will realise the truth." As re-

quested by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa Śrī Ācārya went to the place where Maṇḍana Miśra resided.

Maṇḍana Miśra lived in a city called Māhiṣmatī. Sarasavāṇī was his wife. Both of them were incarnations respectively of Brahmā and Sarasvatī. Maṇḍana Miśra, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and Jaimini held the same view. This view is called *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā* according to which the purport of the Veda is in its *karmakāṇḍa*. The three teachers mentioned above were the leaders of this view.

I shall briefly explain what Pūrva-mīmāṁsā teaches: Is there a God or not? Let us not be concerned with this question. If there is a God let him be. If there is no God it does not matter. We must perform the *karmas* mentioned in the Veda. That *karma* itself will yield its fruit. If we perform an action does not its fruit come to us? Where is the need for the intervention of a God? *Karma* itself will yield its fruit. For instance: we plough the field and as a result paddy grows. The Veda tells us what we do not know through ordinary means of knowledge. If we obey the commands of the Veda we shall enjoy the fruit. For doing what is to be done, there is no need for a God. It may be argued that a God is required for creating the world. But why should God create the world? The world always has been what it is now. Why should we believe that it was created all on a sudden at a particular time?

na kādācit anīdṛṣam jagat

This world has always been there. It was never otherwise than what it is now. That being so, why creation? And why deluge? Living beings keep

coming into existence. Where is the need for God for this purpose? You do what is to be done, that will yield its fruit. If the engine is started, the motor-car runs. The Veda teaches us what is beyond the reach of the intellect. If *karma* is performed in accordance with the Veda we get its fruit automatically. Then there is sound which is beginningless and that is the Veda. Even as we have an intellect the Veda is there. Why should it have a beginning? When did time begin? Is not ether always there? Similarly the Veda too. The Veda is there for the purpose of telling us what is beyond the intellect.

If an evil deed is done, evil will be reaped. If something good is done the result too is good. Deeds will always yield their appropriate results. We enjoy or suffer accordingly and revolve in *saṁsāra*. For this purpose there is no need for a God. We should not remain without doing our work. If we remain so, it is sin and we will go to hell as a consequence.

If we stop doing *karma* sin will result. There are three types of *karma*: *Nitya* (obligatory), *naimittika* (occasioned) and *kāmya* (optional). *Nitya-karmas* are those which are to be done every day. *Naimittika-karmas* are those which should be performed when the appropriate occasions arise. On the occasion of the eclipse one should take a bath and perform *tarpaṇa*.[10] If some great person comes to our house as a guest he must be properly received and attended to. These are *naimittika-karmas*. *Nitya* and *naimittika-karmas* should be necessarily performed by all. *Kāmya-karma* is to be undertaken for

10. Tarpaṇa is satiating gods and departed persons with oblations of water.

achieving some desire. For instance: If we desire rain we must perform *varuṇa-japa*. If the desire is for birth of a son the rite prescribed is *putrakāmeṣṭi*. *Āyuṣya-homa* is done for prolonging life. These are *kāmya-karmas*. One is not obliged to perform them. Such is the view of the *mīmāṁsā*. The followers of this school give reasons for their doctrines.

akaraṇe pratyavāyajanakam, karaṇe'bhyudayam

There are two kinds of *karma*. One kind of *karma* is that which, if not done, will create obstacles. The other kind of *karma* is that which if done will yield welfare. *Pratyavāya* means obstacle. *Abhyudaya* signifies the fruit which causes happiness. *Abhyudaya* includes comfortable house, lands, sons, fame, knowledge etc. In Vedānta *niḥśreyasa* is said to be the final goal. It stands for the unexcellable bliss. *Abhyudaya* means yielding of only small or limited happiness.

Work may be measured. There is appropriate result for each kind of work. This is the path of *karma*. If one kind of work is done the person who does this derives happiness from it. Another kind of work is such that if it is not done obstacles will arise. If we say that *sandhyā-vandana* ought to be performed we are asked by some people 'Why should we perform it?' We can give an answer to them easily in accordance with *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā*. If *sandhyā-vandana* is not performed there will be suffering. It stands to reason that if something is done we shall reap its fruit. But is it reasonable to say that if something is not done there will be difficulty? The followers of *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā* assert that if *sandhyā-van-*

dana is not performed there will be a defect. They do not say that if we perform it we shall acquire welfare. It belongs to the category of actions which if not done will result in defects and difficulties. The other kind of *karma* includes *arcana* in temples, ceremonial bathing of images of the gods, feeding of the Brahmins, etc. One acquires excellence by performing such acts. They belong to the category of action which if performed lead to welfare.

Is it right to say that there are actions which if not done will result in *pratyavāya*? Are there examples of such actions in the world? There are. We give some rice to a beggar. If that is not enough we give him a quarter rupee. If some society appeals for donations to us we give a hundred or two-hundred rupees. Helping others is a merit. It is our duty. We do this expecting to achieve merit. Sometimes we are not inclined to help. At that time we think that we do not require merit. We say, it is not possible to help now. There is no defect accruing from such conduct.

We take Rs. five-hundred as a loan from someone. If we tell him 'I do not want to gain merit by returning you the money' will he keep quiet? He will say 'I have not come here to give you merit. I have only come to get my loan back'. This belongs to the kind of action which if not done will lead to difficulty. Similar is the case of *sandhyā-vandana*. In Tamil *sandhyā-vandana* is called *kālaik-kaḍan* and *mālaik-kaḍan*. These words are beautiful. They mean respectively duty to be done in the morning and in the evening.

If *nitya-karmas* are performed one will gain welfare. Actions that are performed for acquiring welfare are *kāmya-karmas*. *Nitya-karma* can be compared to a debt. The example of indebtedness we have given. But that is not enough. Who incurred the debt and where? some people may ask. We shall consider this question now. In the Taittirīya-saṁhitā of the Veda (6, 3) it is stated that a Brahmin is born with three debts to discharge. The three debts are *ṛṣi-ṛṇa*, *deva-ṛṇa* and *pitṛ-ṛṇa*. We do not know when these debts were incurred. The Veda tells us what we do not know. We may try to understand it with the help of reasoning. Those who have faith in the Veda will think of favourable reasons. In the case of those who do not have faith, the reasons will become unfavourable.

There are two brothers. One of them is a magistrate, the other is a *vaidika*. The former has the duty of attending the court. If he were to abstain from going to court saying 'My brother does not go to the court, why should I alone go?' his superior will say 'It was you that applied for this post. We accepted it and gave you this office. You agreed to serve as a magistrate and therefore you have to come.' Similarly we have applied for gaining a superior state. We must perform *karmas* in accordance with it. That God has made this order is the view of the Vedāntins. But the *Mīmāṁsakas* say that *karma* itself automatically will yield its fruit.

Our birth depends on previous *karma*. We must perform the duties assigned to us. If we do not perform our duty we shall have to face difficulty. In the world codes of good conduct must be followed.

Each should perform the acts which belong to his station. The oilmonger should produce oil and the leather-worker should produce foot-wear. The Brahmin should not eat indiscriminately, but must keep his body, mind and soul pure and meditate on the supreme Self. He must make others also meditate. That is why he has been given some land. In the olden days each professional had his appropriate land-gift. If he ceases from his profession there will be confusion in the world. His land would be taken away from him and would be given to another. In these days tax will be levied on such land. Therefore by failing to do one's duty one will acquire a sin and also will lose the facilities due to him in the world. Through performance of *nitya-karma* there will occur no sin and also there will be welfare. Thus it yields a double result. It results in *pratyavāya* when not done and *abhyudaya* when done. We Vedāntins too accept this position. The nitya-karmas must be done always. We must not fail to perform *śrauta*[11] and *smārta-karmas.*

The Veda says "As long as you live perform the *Agni-hotra* (fire sacrifice)." This ought to be done. The *Mīmāṁsā* view is that it is enough if such *karmas* are done. Those who advocate this view hate *sannyāsa-āśrama.* In the *sannyāsa-āśrama* there are no *karmas.* Relinquishing karma is a great defect according to the *Pūrva-mīmāṁsaka.* Voluntarily giving up karmas and taking *sannyāsa,* according to him, is like becoming a Christian. The *Īśāvāsya-upaniṣad* says that one must desire to live for a hundred years doing *karma.* The *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* declares that if one

11. Śrauta = karmas (rituals) enjoined in the Śruti, i.e. the Veda.

extinguishes the *Agni-hotra* fire, one would incur the sin of killing a hero. Performing evil *karma* is sin. Omitting to perform *nitya-karma* is also sin. The *sannyāsī* is a transgressor. Therefore if one happens even to see him one must perform the appropriate expiatory ceremony. This is the view of the Mīmāṁsakas. Sin will accrue to us if we see a sinner, talk with him, touch him or eat with him. Therefore one should not see a *sannyāsin.* This was the view of Maṇḍana Miśra.

Sannyāsa, Brahman, Mokṣa, Jñāna — are not these stated in the Veda? That being so why do you reject them? If this be asked, the Mīmāṁsakas have a ready answer. We shall see what their answer is. It is true that the Upaniṣads speak about *Jñāna, Brahman* etc., but what is the Veda? The Veda is *śabda* i.e. word. What is its purpose? *Śabda-pramāṇa* makes known what is not otherwise known. *Śabda-pramāṇa* reveals what cannot be seen with the eyes and what cannot be understood by surmise. Its purpose is not to tell us what is of no use. All words have two types of use. They say (1) Do this and (2) Do not do this.

pravṛttirvā nivṛttirvā nityena kṛtakena vā
puṁsām yenopadiśyeta tacchāstram abhidhīyate

This is the view of the Mīmāṁsakas. Words that speak about an existent entity alone are of no use. They are vain and useless words. If a person says: "A crow is flying" or "crows are black" what is the use of such statements? If we say "Tomorrow night there will be a discourse here" it has a meaning. The meaning is "all are welcome to attend." The use lies in activity. If it is said "there is a discourse in

Kumbhakonam tomorrow" it is a useless statement. Who is prepared to go there from here? There should be no word without some use. The use should be either activity or withdrawal from activity. All other words are vain and useless. The Veda is in two parts. The first part consists of injunctions and prohibitions. The second part consists of stories. This part has no independent purport. It must be construed along with some injunction. In an advertisement about a *lehya* (tonic) for body-building, there is a picture of a sturdy man fighting a lion. What is the purpose of this picture? The meaning is that you should buy the tonic spending your money, falsely believing in the efficacy of the tonic. The stories that are related in the Veda are useful only in association with an injunction. These stories are called *artha-vāda* (eulogistic and condemnatory passages). The manufacturer of some medicine publishes the certificates he has obtained for this medicine. Why does he print them in his advertisement? The reason is that he wants his medicine to sell. In the *artha-vādas* there is a mixture of truth and falsity. The falsity is called *guṇa-vāda.* There is also true *artha-vāda.* There is one type which is known as *anu-vāda* which says what we already know. That fire burns is known. Saying it is *anu-vāda.* In a particular medicine there are some components. Detailing them is *bhūtārtha-vāda.*

Bhūtārtha-vāda has the purpose of being useful to an injunction by relating a false story. "Do not drink toddy" is an injunction. "The one who drinks is destroyed immediately" is *artha-vāda.* The meaning is that one should not drink toddy. If it is said

'If toddy is drunk there will be giddiness' this is *anu-vāda.* All stories thus should be related to something which is to be done (*kārya*).

In the Veda there is a section which describes a particular sacrifice. There it is said "Give gold as a gift, do not give silver."

In the Taittirīya-saṁhitā it is stated that silver should not be offered as a gift. In this context a long story is related and at the end the statement is made "Do not give silver". The purpose of this story is to show what should not be done. This *artha-vāda* has purport only in stating an injunction. The words that constitute it have no purport in themselves. It is in this manner that the Mīmāṁsakas give their reply to the objection that was raised above.

It is true that the Upaniṣads speak about the nature of *Brahman.* They do not enjoin something as what is to be done. But when will the Veda become *pramāṇa?* Only when it speaks about what is to be done (*kārya*). Therefore the Upaniṣads are *artha-vāda.* One part of the Veda says about what already exists, but what is it that we should know? Is it existent things or is it the deeds that we should do? We should perform *yāga, yajña* (sacrifices) etc. *Śabda* is for this purpose. We do not need *śabda* for knowing what already exists. What exists can be known somehow. Therefore that part of the Veda which speaks about existent objects is *artha-vāda.* Śabda should tell us what we do not know. Therefore the Upaniṣads are not *pramāṇa.* What then are they for? Their purpose is to praise the sacrificer. They eulogize the *jīva* who wants to perform ritual.

The purpose is to enthuse him so that he will do his *karma* properly and well. Refraining from performing *karma* is wrong. To become a *sannyāsin* is also wrong.

Holding such views Maṇḍana Miśra lived in the city of Māhiṣmatī. "One must work and enjoy the wage that one earns from it. It is work that must give its wage to the worker". This was Maṇḍana's view. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya went to him. He thought about the Mīmāṁsākas thus: "They cannot gain the eternal bliss. They long only for transitory happiness. They believe in repeated births. This is not good. They must be made to realise that their beliefs are wrong. Therefore I should engage myself in a debate with their leader Maṇḍana Miśra." Miśra as already mentioned was Sarasvatī's husband. He preached against the Buddhists and strongly established the Mīmāṁsā view.

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya went to Māhiṣmatī and was in search of the place where Maṇḍana Miśra lived. He saw women coming back from the river taking water in their vessels. He asked them "Where is Maṇḍana Miśra's house?" They were scholarly people. They replied in the form of a verse while Śrī Śaṅkara framed this question in simple prose. This is the reply that the women gave.

svataḥ pramāṇam parataḥ pramāṇam kīrāṅganā yatra ca saṁgirante
dvārasthanīḍāntarasaṁniruddhā jānīḥ tanmaṇḍanapaṇḍitaukaḥ

[Mādhavaśaṅkara-vijaya, LIX, 6]

This is the meaning of this verse: "That house

is Maṇḍana Miśra's in whose porch parrots would be saying "*svataḥ pramāṇam parataḥ pramāṇam.*" Even the parrots in Maṇḍana Miśra's house would discuss *śāstra.* Even the women of that city had the ability to compose verses.

What is *svataḥ pramāṇam* and what is *parataḥ pramāṇam*? Gautama wrote the *Nyāya-sūtra* and Kaṇāda the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra.* Both these works constitute *tarka* (logic) *śāstras.* Following the teachings of this logical school one Gaṅgeśa Miśra Upādhyāya wrote a work called Tattva-cintāmaṇi. He has stated therein sixty-four *vādās.*

At first he was an unintelligent person. He lived in Bengal. He belonged to a *kulīna Brahmin* family. *Kulīna* means one born in a good family. To one born in a good family ordinary and low-level Brahmin girls would be given in marriage. One man for instance would marry more than fifty girls. But Gaṅgeśa Miśra married only one girl and he lived in his father-in-law's house. Brahmins in Bengal would eat fish. In that country for more than six months in the year there would be flood. There would be no land to grow vegetables. And so during those months they would eat fish. In the eastern part of Bengal people call the fish water-flower.

In the house of Gaṅgeśa's father-in-law it was a habit to cook fish. Gaṅgeśa used to be called Gaṅgā for short. Thinking that he was unintelligent they would serve on his leaf-plate the bones of fish and on other plates the flesh. And then all those who were there would make fun of him. This he could not bear. One day without informing anybody he went to Kāśī.

There he studied for ten years. The people at home thought that the foolish Gaṅgā had gone somewhere and they did not take any trouble to trace him. After studying for ten years he returned home. The family thought that he had come back after roaming about for such a long time. When he sat for eating, bones were served on his leaf-plate as usual. Then he composed a verse, *nāham gaṅgā kiṁ tu gaṅgeśamiśraḥ* meaning "I am not the river Gaṅgā; I am Gaṅgeśa Miśra. If I were to be the Gaṅgā it would be all right to throw bones into it."

This Gaṅgeśa Miśra wrote the *Tattva-cintāmaṇi.* Many scholars have written commentaries on it. One Raghunātha Śiromaṇi wrote a commentary called Dīdhiti. It was only after this scholar that the title *Śiromaṇi* came into use. One Gadādhara wrote a commentary on this. In that work, for ten *vādas* he wrote an explanation which is in the form of a long treatise. Although it is long, not one sentence is superfluous. If one reads even five *vādas* in this work, Gadādharī, one would become very intelligent. If one reads ten *vādas* one's intelligence would be increased enormously. After that there is *prāmāṇya-vāda.* If this is read by one he would become the most intelligent of all. There is a logical work called Cintāmaṇi that is not available in this southern part of the country. There is a commentary thereon called Jāgadīśī. There is another commentary by one *Dharmarāja-Dīkṣita,* there is still another commentary by one Madhurānātha, but it is the Gadādharī that is studied by all.

Prāmāṇya-vāda is one of the *vādas* stated there. A scholar from South India went to Navadvīpa (Nadia) with the intention of studying *tarka* (logic) there.

This is the place where there were many logicians. The scholar who went from here was a great poet. By his ability to compose poems he had amassed great wealth in the south. But when he went to Navadvīpa and started studying logic nothing entered his mind. He tried his best but the result was that he lost his skill in poesy. His wrangles with logic in which he did not succeed resulted only in the loss of his poetical skill. He lost his wealth also. At least his skill had brought him money. Even that was now gone and therefore he was in great difficulty. He could not master *prāmāṇya-vāda.* But there was still some poetical ability left. He composed the following line.

namaḥ prāmānyavādāya matkavitvāpahāriṇe

The meaning is, "I pay obeisance to *prāmāṇya-vāda* which has destroyed my poetical skill."

It was this *prāmāṇya-vāda* that Maṇḍana Miśra's parrots were discussing. Let us enquire into the nature of this *vāda.* When we see an object there arises cognition in us. Some cognitions are valid and others are invalid. We may see a crystal and think that it is a piece of candy. This is invalid cognition. Knowing candy as candy is valid knowledge. Valid knowledge is known as *pramā.* Invalid knowledge is *bhrama.* Doubtful knowledge and determinate knowledge are two kinds of knowledge. Even when we see that which is invalid, during the time of seeing, it seems to be true. At that time it appears that that knowledge is true. Some cognitions even at the beginning are realised to be false. The reflection of a tree in a tank is realised to be false. As knowledge, its recognition as true or untrue is twofold in kind. When

a knowledge is realized to be true as it arises, it is *prāmāṇya-graha-jñāna.* When invalid knowledge is recognised as invalid even when it rises, it is *aprāmāṇya-graha-āskandhita-jñāna.* There is knowledge of validity in regard to both *prama* and *bhrama.* When crystal is mistaken for sugar-candy it seems to us to be valid. If there is knowledge in the form 'this is a lamp' it is also true knowledge. 'This is a plantain tree' is also true. These are two kinds of knowledge. Even at the time when we have the knowledge 'This is a plantain-tree' is there the knowledge 'This is true'? Or is the knowledge that it is true from some other source? Those who accept the former view sponsor *svataḥ-pramāṇa-vāda* and those who support the latter view advocate *parataḥ pramāṇa-vāda.*

Such views were being debated by the parrots in Maṇḍana Miśra's house, to which place Śrī Śaṅkarācārya went. On that day Maṇḍana Miśra was engaged in performing a *śrāddha* ceremony. He was a very wealthy man. He had performed many *soma-yāgas.*

Soma-yāga is known as *jyoti-ṣṭoma.* It would be performed in every spring season. For performing a *yajña* three things are necessary — money, ability and knowledge. Those wealthy men who get from their lands in one year grains that would be enough for their maintenance for three years should perform *yāga* every spring. They are known as *prativasanta-soma-yājins.* Now-a-days they perform *yāga* by receiving donations. Wealthy men spend their money unnecessarily in celebrating weddings etc.

Maṇḍana Miśra was a very wealthy person. So he was performing this *śrāddha* ceremony in a grand manner.

His home was shut and bolted from within. There is a legend about the way Śrī Śaṅkarācārya entered the home. In those days a secret art was known to toddy-tappers. Standing beneath a coconut palm tree they will beat the trunk uttering a *mantra.* Then the tree would bend. Again if he uttered another *mantra* it would stand erect. Śrī Śaṅkara went to a toddy-tapper and learnt this art. There was a coconut palm tree outside Maṇḍana Miśra's house. Śrī Śaṅkara climbed the tree and uttered the appropriate *mantra.* The palm tree bent inside the house and left Śrī Śaṅkara there. This story is not related in the Śaṅkara-vijayas. In those texts the version is that Śrī Śaṅkara entered the house through the power of yoga. For the *śrāddha* ceremony Vyāsa and Jaimini had come for *brāhmaṇārtha* (feeding Brahmins during the *śrāddha* ceremony). Even as the serpent Takṣa went to Parīkṣit hidden in a lemon-fruit Śrī Śaṅkara had entered Maṇḍana's house inspite of the care that had been taken not to allow anyone to enter. Maṇḍana Miśra got very angry on seeing Śrī Śaṅkara. There are many stories which relate how a talk started between the two. Maṇḍana Miśra asked the visitor: "Wherefrom are you, shaven-headed one?" Śri Śaṅkara humorously replied taking a different meaning for the word 'wherefrom' and said: "I am shaven-headed from my neck." *Sannyāsins* should have a shave up to the neck. Jaimini and Vyāsa pacified both Maṇḍana Miśra and Śaṅkara. They said to Maṇḍana Miśra: "According to scripture it is

sannyāsins that should be requested for *brāhmanārtha* and so please make Śrī Śaṅkara take the place of Viṣṇu." When such great ones as Vyāsa and Jaimini give a direction what could Maṇḍana Miśra do? The one who performs a *srāddha* ceremony must carry out the directions of those invited for *brāhmaṇārtha*. Therefore Maṇḍana Miśra offered obeisance to Śrī Ācārya and invited him for *bhikṣā*. Śrī Śaṅkara replied: "I have come for *vāda-bhikṣā* and not for food."

Now-a-days the term *vāda* is taken to mean verbal fight. But that is not true. Verbal fight is called *jalpa*. *Vāda* means exchange of thought with a view to know what one does not know. Debate with a view to understand the truth is called *vāda*. *Jalpa* on the contrary means arguing with a view to show that the participant is totally wrong. Apart from these two kinds there is a third one which is called *vitandā*. In this type of debate one does not have a view of one's own but is interested only in demolishing whatever the participant says.

When Śrī Ācārya asked for *vāda-bhikṣā* Maṇḍana said: "Let this *bhikṣā* be over and then we can have the *bhikṣā* you have asked for." As soon as the *śrāddha* was over the *vāda* began. There was the question of appointing an umpire. Maṇḍana's wife Sarasavānī who was an *avatāra* of Sarasvatī was asked to serve as umpire. On whose side could she speak? One of the debators was a *sannyāsin* and the other was her husband. Whoever was defeated it was difficult for her to say. Therefore she put a flower-garland on each of them and said that the one whose garland began to wither first would be deemed the defeated

person.[12] Before the debate began, the two participants came to an understanding. Śaṅkara said to Maṇḍana: "If I win you should take *sannyāsa,* if you win I shall become a house-holder after performing the appropriate expiatory ceremony or I will continue to perform expiation until death." Sarasavānī gave her agreement for this proposal. The debate continued for twenty-one days. On the twenty-first day the flower-garland around Maṇḍana Miśra's neck began to wither. At once Sarasavānī offered obeisance to both of them and asked them to accept *bhikṣā.* Maṇḍana Miśra took *sannyāsa*. Śaṅkara gave him the name Sureśvarācārya. Sureśvara wrote a work called *Naiṣkarmya siddhi*. The purport of this work is that through the Veda one can gain the bliss which is other than the fruits of *karma.*

How did Śrī Ācārya gain a victory over Maṇḍana Miśra? If any word is uttered it must be useful in accomplishing an act. Because a deed is the fruit we accept *śabda*. If freedom from action be the fruit, can we not then accept *śabda* as authority? Action may be the fruit of *śabda*. If actionlessness be the fruit that also should be regarded as the purport of *śabda.* Therefore the purport of *śabda* is the fruit and not action. It is said in the Veda "Do not drink liquor." What do you do when you hear this? You do not do anything. Has not this *śabda* a purport? Not

12. In this connection see "The Secret Life of Plants" by Peter Tomkins and Christopher Bird (Penguin Publications 1978). The following passage may be of some interest for understanding the behaviour of plants including flowers: "...at the Bose Institute near Calcutta he first became aware that plants not only give off radiations which can be sensed by man, but are themselves sensitive to the radiations given off by humans."—Tr.

doing anything is its purport. Being without anything is called *abhāva*. *Abhāva* is the purport of all prohibitions. If remaining without doing an action can be a fruit, staying without doing any action should be the greatest fruit. Because the Vedāntic texts have for their purport actionlessness they are supremely purportful. The Lord says in the *Gītā*: *sarvaṁ karmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate* (iv, 33).

All *karmas* should be offered to Parameśvara. Remaining without *karma* is the supreme truth. That is unexcellable bliss. When this is realised there will be no more birth. This is the supreme purport of the Veda. The entire *karma-kāṇḍa* must be construed as auxiliary to *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, and only then will *karma-kāṇḍa* be of use. Śrī Śaṅkara established this view in his debate with Maṇḍana Miśra.

While Maṇḍana Miśra became Śrī Śaṅkara's disciple, Sarasvatī started to go back to her original state thinking "What further purpose is there for me?" At that time Śaṅkara told her: "You too should stay here. You will remain as Śāradā Pīṭha." Śaṅkara established a Pīṭha for her and invoked her presence there.

XI

YANTRA STAPANA

Maṇḍana Miśra's view was this: The Vedic texts are not intended to describe the nature of the supreme Self. Their truth is the performance of *karma*. Their purport is not teaching about the supreme Self.

"Why does the Veda have purport in what-is-to-be-done? Only if the Veda enjoins an action it would have fruit. Because there is fruit it speaks about action. If the fruit that is gained by not doing any action is a million times greater than that which one has by doing action, then actionlessness could be the supreme purport of the Veda." This is Śrī Ācārya's view. Therefore he said that those sections of the Veda which speak about *karma* have reference to Īśvara. Mere *karma* is useless. The Veda speaks about a substrate which is of the nature of the supreme Self. That should be gained. Śrī Ācārya taught this truth to Maṇḍana Miśra and gave him *sannyāsa*. Maṇḍana Miśra was given the name Sureśvarācārya. Later he wrote the book *Naiṣkarmya Siddhi*. It speaks about the method of attaining the supreme Self through actionlessness. The supreme Self is of the nature of love and bliss.

The Veda says: "He knew *ānanda* as *Brahman.*" Maṇḍana Miśra realised that *ānanda* is *Brahman.*

We may develop a kind of love for a man. The love may be divided into three kinds — high, middle and low. The same may be stated in terms of the *guṇas* (dispositions) as *sāttvika, rājasa* and *tāmasa.* There arises love in great people such as the wise ones, *yogins,* votaries of truth, those who help others, *jñānīs* and those who save people by the power of grace. This love arises from their *guṇa.* This is one type of love. We may develop a type of love even without our knowing. There may be greater people than the friends whom we know. But on account of the habit of acquaintance we show love only to the latter. The love that we have for children, mother, brothers and others is the result of the habit of acquaintance. If someone other than our mother brings us up we show her even greater love than to our mother. Such and similar love is the result of habit of acquaintance. Now for the third type of love. There may arise love with some ulterior motive. Being friendly to a big merchant is with a view to gain monetary help from him. This is love with a view to gain some benefit. These three types of love are due to the three *guṇas.* The first type of love is *sāttvika.* In regard to the second type which arises out of habit of acquaintance there is no rule. It is love that is beyond any rule. It is *rājasa* love. *Tāmasa* love is that which is shown for gaining some end. Being faithful to one's master belongs to this type. All these three types of love are transitory. Even the *sāttvika* variety will get lost. It is shown because of some excellence that is in those to whom

it is directed. When that excellence disappears the love too will go. The second type of love will wear away in course of time or when the acquaintance is lost. The greater the acquaintance the more we weep for those with whom we are acquainted when they are lost. Weeping thus is wrong. One should not weep at all. Weeping when we are separated from those whom we love is considered normal by us. The cause of weeping is separation. But if this be considered normal, then whenever we are separated from those whom we love we must weep. Even after twenty years we should weep. If a child is born and dies we weep, but do we weep after sixty years for the child? No. The cause for weeping, now, exists then also but we do not weep then. These kinds of love are useless. They arise because of acquaintance. This is the type of love which is middling. Even the *sāttvika* type of love is not true love. It arises because of some excellence we see in those to whom we show it. After some time we may think that this excellence is not there. Then the love will not be there. We show our love to those whom we consider great because we think that they will save us from difficulty. The cause for this love is our own selfish end. If we love those who are truthful it is the truth that we see in them that is the cause for this love. We do not love them for their own sake. A servant loves his master. This is for the sake of the salary he draws. If he is sent away he will no longer love his erstwhile master. All these three types of love are reflections of the supreme love that is Paramaśiva. These reflections are caused, one for the sake of some excellence, the second for the sake of acquaintance

and the third for the sake of some benefit to be derived. But the love that is Īśvara is intrinsic. This is the love that is spoken about in Vedānta. Śrī Ācārya taught this to Maṇḍana Miśra. This love is not extrinsic like the three types of love we referred to above. We place our love in Rāma. For what reason? He is supremely good, protector of the poor, devoted to truth, loyal to one and only wife, and good qualities are seen in him. That is why we love him. Even this love is extrinsic. The love that is Īśvara is intrinsic. He loves us without any cause. If He should love us for the sake of some excellence in us we will not get even a single much-needed meal as a consequence of His grace because we have no excellence at all. Īśvara's love does not expect any return. Such love does not change even if the object of love is not seen for a hundred years or is seen, or is evil, or is of no use at all. Intrinsic love will not be affected by any such considerations. If love arises because we see some goodness in the one we love, then, when that goodness changes our love also will go. Even as we are attached to some benefit we may derive, or to some excellence, we must have love for man as such. Without loving Rāma for the excellencies we see in him we must love him for his own sake. We do wrong, we speak untruth but do we reject ourselves? No. For making ourselves good we try all our lives. Our attitude towards others should be the same. We should not hate a man because he is a sinner. We must try to make every one good. Love should not be for any ulterior purpose. Parameśvara has intrinsic love. We too should have such love. And that is *bhakti*. If *bhakti* which is abso-

lute should spread everywhere it must start with *guru-bhakti*. Then one should regard the entire world as *guru* and show unconditional love to all beings. If someone does something wrong even then we should not hate that one but think. "We too do wrong, similarly that person has done wrong as his mind prompts him to act in that manner." Without any hatred we should try to render that person's mind good. In order to accomplish this we must have the same love for all beings. If we have such love, then the aforementioned thought will come to us. We must have the same love for a person who does what he should not do. If we see in another person some defect or some merit we must consider these as if they are in us and try to remove the defect. The world should be filled with such love when *ānanda* will be gained. This is the plenary state, the state of *Brahman*. Thus Śrī Ācārya taught Maṇḍana Miśra. When a person enters *sannyāsa-āśrama* he utters a *mantra* which means "No being should be afraid of me." If any living being sees him it must not be afraid of him. When people look at him they must experience a kind of *ānanda*. That is why the practice of *ahiṁsā* is particularly intended for *sannyāsins*. Buddhism teaches that all should adopt the virtue of *ahiṁsā*. Our *śāstras* say that complete *ahiṁsā* is for the *sannyāsin*. The house-holder has the duty to support some people and so he has to acquire provisions such as grains, vegetables etc. In so acquiring, some *hiṁsā* (or violence) is necessarily involved. A *sannyāsin* should not even pluck leaves from trees. He should gather only the leaves that have fallen of their own accord. He should not cook food, because cooking involves

himsā. He should show love to all beings. If love becomes complete he will develop the thought "I am Śiva."

There is nothing special in bestowing love only on those who are great. There should be love towards the great sinner also. In fact, he deserves all the love possible. If we have the power of blessing as a result of Īśvara's compassion we should remove all sins from him. The way to this should start with devotion to *guru*. If the entire world is filled with love then there would arise plenary peace in the mind.

Śrī Ācārya blessed Maṇḍana Miśra by granting him the *sannyāsāśrama* which is filled with universal love. Taking him with him he went to Kailāsa, and from there he brought five crystal *Liṅgas*. Śrī Ācārya himself is Īśvara; therefore the one who received the *Liṅgas*; the one who gave them and the *Liṅgas* which were given are all Śiva. In Vedānta this is what is known as *tripuṭī* (triple factor). The seer, the seen and the seeing are three factors. Similarly, the thinker, that which is thought about and thinking. It is the one supreme Self that appears as these three. This is the teaching of Vedānta. In order to reveal this teaching, it seems Śrī Ācārya received the crystal Liṅgas from Īśvara.

Then Śrī Ācārya went to Badari and Kedāra. There he saw Gauḍapāda. On the way he met Govinda Bhagavatpāda. He sang the Dakṣināmūrti-aṣṭaka and offered him obeisance.

Afterwards he undertook his *dig-vijaya* visiting the different parts of India. In each area or part of

the country he either invited the scholars or went to the place where they were, met them, came to know their different views and convinced them as to which of their doctrines were contradictory to the Veda and succeeded in convincing them. When the scholars were persuaded of the soundness of the Ācārya's teaching, the people also accepted it. Śrī Ācārya circumambulated the country from the Setu to the Himālayas three times. Some of the sacred places he visited are Gokarṇa, Śrī-Śaila, Parameśvaram, Tirupati, Jambukeśvaram, Jagannātha, Dwārakā, Śriṅgagiri etc. In many places he established monastic institutions (*maṭhas*). The *Bairāgis* (renunciates) speak of *cārdhām*. Every Bairāgi goes to four places — Badarināth, Rāmnāth, Dwārakānath, and Jagannāth. These constitute *cārdhām*. In all these places Śrī Ācārya instituted *maṭhas*.

Śrī Ācārya consecrated the Śrī Cakra in Kāñcīpuram thereby transforming the angry aspects of the deity into the peaceful aspect. At Tirupati he established Dhanākarṣanayantra[13] and at Śrī Raṅgam the Janākarṣana-yantra.[14] At Tiruvaṟṟiyur he contained an evil force and sealed it and he arranged for the performance of *pūjā* to it one day during each year. At Mūkāmbikā kṣetra he consecrated the Śrī Cakra. At Jambukeśvaram the goddess Akhilandeśvarī was with a fierce mood. In order to remove this Śrī Ācārya adorned her image with two ear-rings in the form of *Cit-cakra* and *Śrī-cakra*. In different places in the

13. Dhanākarśana-yantra is a mystic design established in the temple for the purpose of bringing monetary contributions from the devotees.
14. The purpose of Janākarṣaṇa-yantra is to draw plenty of people.

country people still speak of the services rendered by Śrī Ācārya by way of spiritual renaissance. In the Śaṅkara-vijayas these are not mentioned.

About this time Śrī Ācārya's mother who was nearing her end thought of him. As he had given her his promise he hastened to Kāladi. He knew that his mother's end was near. He recited a hymn which had Advaita as its purport. The mother could not understand. Then Śrī Ācārya sang a hymn to Śiva. Śiva's principal attendants came. Seeing them the mother said that she was afraid. Immediately thereafter he sang a hymn to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu's attendants who were all beautiful came. They took with them the mother's soul. After the departure of the soul he wanted to cremate the mother's body. The half-baked scholars who were there, were of the view that it is wrong for a *sannyāsin* to perform the last rites. They refused to render any help. Therefore Śrī Śaṅkara dismembered his mother's body, took the parts one by one to the back-yard and cremated them. Even today this practice is followed in Kerala.

After some time Padmapādācārya approached Śrī Ācārya one day and asked for permission to undertake a pilgrimage to Rāmeśvaram. Śrī Ācārya gave him the permission. When Padmapāda undertook this journey, he took with him the gloss he had written on Śrī Ācārya's Sūtra-bhāṣya. On the way at Tiruvānaikar (Jambukeśvaram) he placed his manuscript in his uncle's house for safe custody. The uncle was a fanatical follower of *karma-kāṇḍa*. He thought "This manuscript contains what is opposed to us. And so it must be burnt." He had two houses. He transferred the things that were in one of the houses, except for the manuscript, to the other house and set fire to the first one. When Padmapāda returned from Rāmeśvaram he asked his uncle for the return of his manuscript. The uncle said that it was destroyed along with his house and that there was nothing further to do about it. Padmapāda went back to Śrī Ācārya and reported what had happened. In that gloss there were four chapters. Each chapter contained four *pādas* (sections). Śrī Ācārya had heard Padmapāda read to him the first chapter and the first section of the second chapter. This he remembered. He said to Padmapāda "You did not read further on. I remember what you read out to me." He repeated what he remembered. That book is now known as the Pañcapādika. There is a commentary on it called Vivaraṇa. The Vivaraṇa has a commentary which is known as Tattvadīpana.

We have so far referred to two of Śrī Ācārya's disciples namely Sureśvara and Padmapāda. We shall now speak about a third disciple Hastāmalaka. He was born on the West Coast in the Karnātaka country. When Śrī Ācārya visited that place a Brahmin met him and said: "My son has been dumb since his birth. It is you that can make him speak." Saying this he prostrated before the Ācārya. Seeing that dumb boy Śrī Ācārya asked him "Who are you?" At once the boy said "I am not the earth, I am not ether, not a woman, not a man. I am pure consciousness." The father was very happy at his boy's gaining the power of speech. He asked his son to prostrate before the Master and took him back to his house. On reaching the house the boy was again dumb. The father brought the boy again. When the boy met Śrī

Ācārya he spoke. The boy's father then said to the Master "This is not my child, he is yours." So saying he left the boy with the Master and went away. That boy became Hastāmalaka. To a metrical work written by Hastāmalaka Śrī Ācārya wrote a commentary. It is known as Hastāmalakīya bhāṣya.

Another disciple of Śrī Śaṅkara composed a poem in the *toṭaka* meter. Therefore he received the name Toṭakācārya. Giri was his previous name. He would gather bilva-leaves, flowers etc. for daily *pūjā*, and would wash the Master's clothes. He had an unintelligent appearance. One day Śrī Ācārya sat for giving instruction to his disciples whose number was then about 6000. They were all eagerly waiting for Śrī Ācārya to start. Giri had not come by then. Śrī Ācārya was waiting for his arrival. The other disciples thought: "Why should the Master wait for Giri? Whether he comes or does not come it is the same." Śrī Ācārya understood what those disciples were thinking. He thought: "Is this the way in which the other disciples are thinking about Giri? Their jealousy should be removed." Giri who had gone out came back dancing. As he came he was singing a hymn in the *toṭaka* meter to his *Guru*. I shall cite one of those verses here.

viditākhilaśāstrasudhājaladhe
mahitopaniṣatkathitārthanidhe
hṛdaye kalaye vimalaṁ caraṇam
bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.

All the disciples who were assembled there then understood the greatness of Giri when they heard the verses, and saw his bliss experience,

Śrī Ācārya made his tours, destroyed the evil cults, established *Maṭhas* in different places and then classified the six ways of approach to Godhead (Ṣaṇmatas). That the culminating experience of these six ways is Advaita is what he taught. After this he ascended the seat of omniscience. When the king of Kāñcī requested Śrī Ācārya after his tours of victory to ascend the seat of omniscience, Śrī Ācārya in Kāñcīkṣetra held a debate with many scholars, defeated them and ascended the seat of omniscience. It is stated that a seven year old child engaged the Ācārya in a debate for seven days. In the life-story of Śrī Ācārya this is the last incident. It is similar to Rāma Paṭṭabhiṣeka.

Many are the works of Śrī Ācārya; of them there are several which expound the *śāstras*. There are also hymns which will be found useful even to children. Such are Govindāṣṭaka, Candraśekharāṣṭaka, Bhaja Govinda etc. There are also easy manuals on Vedānta like Viveka Cūḍāmaṇi, Upadeśa Sāhasri and Sarva-Vedānta-Siddhānta-Sārasaṅgraha. It is not necessary that all should read the works which teach *jñāna* principally. One should read at least one of his works. When one reads what he has written it would be like speaking to him directly. There is a hymn called Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṁha-stotra. The following is a verse from that hymn.

tvatprabhujīvapriyamicchasi cennaraharipūjām
kurusatatam
pratibimbālaṁkṛtidhṛtikuśalo bimbālaṁkṛtim
ātanute
cetobhṛṅga bhramasi vṛthābhavamarubhūmau
virasāyām

bhaja bhaja lakṣmīnarasiṁhānaghapadasarasi-
jamakarandam
(Verse i.)

"O, the mind-bee, get at the sweet honey which is in the blemishless Lotus-feet of Lakṣmīnarasiṁha. Why do you wander in the desert of saṁsāra?" This is the substance of this verse. The lord of the mind is the *jīva*, the *jīva* must develop a liking for attaining the feet of Lakṣmīnarasiṁha.

When we look into a mirror there appears in it a reflection which is like us. If we want to apply a black dot to the forehead of the reflection and if we apply it there, only the mirror will get blackened. Similar is the deed that we undertake to gain enjoyment and welfare for ourselves. We may go out dressed in a cloth properly ironed showing it off thinking that those who see would admire. But contrary to our expectation we only become objects of ridicule for those who observe us. They would be saying: "Today ironing has got onto his clothes." Thus those who observe us would not feel happy as we expected. Similarly if we endeavour to satisfy ourselves, it results in debasing ourselves. All attempts to adorn ourselves will share the same fate. Therefore there is no use in catering to our tastes.

In each mind there is the reflection of pure consciousness which is the supreme Self. That reflection has some little power. The sun gives brightness to the entire world. The reflected sun has only very limited brightness. Similarly the *jīva* has some little knowledge. If we are to apply a black dot to the reflected face in the mirror, one must in fact apply it

to the original face. If we serve the supreme Self it will be serving all beings including the *jīva* who serves. One who wants to decorate the reflection will decorate the prototype. It is he that is an intelligent person. Similarly if the *jīva* desires happiness it must seek the feet of the supreme Self. This is why Śrī Ācārya says "All other efforts are in vain."

Śrī Ācārya makes use of the word *vṛthā* often. The following is a verse from the Śivānanda Laharī:

ghato vā mṛtpiṇḍo'py anurapi ca dhūmo'
gniracalaḥ
paṭo vā tantur vā pariharati kiṁ
ghoraśamanam,
vṛthā kaṇṭhakṣobham vahasi tarasā
tarkavacasā
padāmbhojaṁ śaṁbhorbhaja
paramasaukhyām vraja sudhīḥ
(Śivānanda Laharī, Verse 6.)

We read all sorts of sciences and also *śāstras*. We become experts in logic, grammar, etc. What is the use of studying all these? We argue "Pot has come from clay, smoke from fire, cloth from thread" etc. Will such argument prevent the messengers of death approaching us? What is the use of speaking with vigour and in anger? Will this drive away death from us? What is it that will save us from death? If we offer obeisance to the Lotus-Feet of Śiva it will bring us supreme happiness. If you are an intelligent person you will not waste your time in useless studies and debate. All these are in vain. In the Bhaja Govinda Stotra Śrī Ācārya says:

saṁprāpte sannihite kāle
nahi nahi rakṣati dukṛñkaraṇe

The meaning is that when the god of death comes grammar will be of no use. Bhaja Govinda is a hymn to Viṣṇu and the previous verse is from a hymn to Śiva. Here in the Bhaja Govinda grammar is mentioned. In the verse to Śiva, logic is referred to. These two are the same in that they are useless. The two hymns are the same in that they are supremely useful. Both of them have an identical purport. The teaching of all śāstras is that we should develop devotion, *bhakti*.

Yama, the god of death, does not keep quiet even a single moment. He is always approaching us. The more the number of days we pass the nearer he comes. Every moment he is nearing us. We do not know when exactly he will come to us. Whether he comes or does not, we should surrender at the feet of the One who is the death of death.

kālakālaṁ prapannānāṁ kālaḥ
kiṁ nu kariṣyati

Śrī Ācārya expounded the Vedānta Śāstra. He himself said: "If you do not understand anything, at least say 'Govinda' 'Govinda'. At the time of having a meal one must utter the name Govinda. While eating one must be silent. While performing *sandhyā-vandana* of course one should be silent. If one eats after uttering the name Govinda the food will go in along with that mental attitude. It will help in one's meditation on the supreme Self. When such food-essence enters the body and becomes a part of it the remembrance of God will develop. Śrī Ācārya's teaching begins with Bhaja Govinda and ends in the truth of the supreme Self. Every day before taking a meal we must utter the name of Govinda. We are not going to stop eating on any day and so the uttering of the name Govinda will be there every day.

At the time of the *sandhyā-vandana* we must meditate on the feet of Parameśvara. All should observe fast on Ekādaśī-day. The purpose of listening to Śrī Ācārya's digvijaya is the removing of blemishes from our mind and the gaining of internal victory. According to instruction one should not forget meditating on Parameśvara even one single day. We should worship Śrī Ācārya even as we celebrate festivals like Gokulāṣṭamī and Navarātrī. We should observe Śrī Ācārya's Jayanti on the vaiśākha-śuddha-pañcamī day. In temples festivals like Navarātrī are celebrated in a grand manner. Similarly people should come together and collectively observe Śrī Śaṅkara Jayanti. Śrī Ācārya-pādukā should be worshipped. If we do these things we shall gain Śrī Ācārya's grace and as a result all good things will come to us.
